

CBW

Number One
For PSV Professionals

COACH AND BUS WEEK Wednesday May 3, 2006 Issue 728 £2.50

1st
for recruitment
Job Adverts
Every Week

THIS WEEK



New Transit

First pictures and
report on Ford's
new minibus
[page 35](#)

Scottish CPT

All the news
from the CPT's
Gleneagles event
[page 10](#)

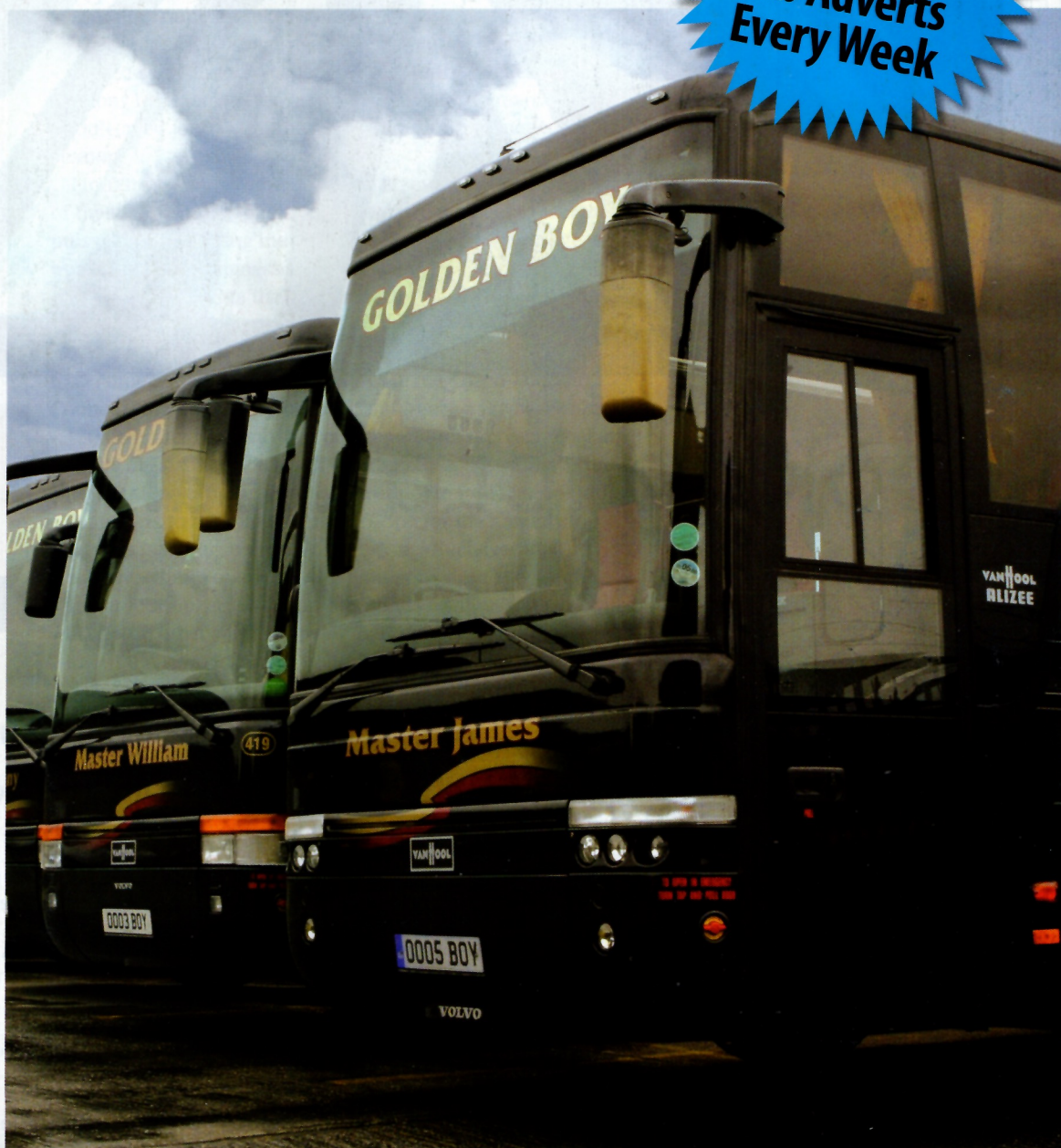


The Liberal viewpoint

Face to face with
Alistair Carmichael
[page 30](#)

CV Show

Full report from the
NEC's Commercial
Vehicle Show
[page 35](#)



Boy Wonder

Golden Boy has one of the most
distinctive fleets around. We take
a look [pages 22-27](#)



Looking for a clear route to drive your future forward?



...and looking for a way to secure your future prosperity?

Find out what your land could be worth

George Wimpey, the UK's leading house builder is always looking for that next development opportunity. So if you own a Bus or Coach business and are looking for direction, we would like to hear from you.

At George Wimpey we don't just build and sell over 14,000 homes every year across the UK. We make every effort to ensure our developments interact positively with their individual surroundings. This makes our homes places that people want to live.

Recent acquisitions of land just like yours have taught us that you need a commitment that we'll deliver the value of your property when we say we will.

If you're interested in securing your financial future, we are keen to talk to you wherever your Bus or Coach business is located, although we are particularly interested in those that are based in residential areas.

For further information or an informal chat about how George Wimpey could point you in the right direction, please call Iain Pay, Land Manager, George Wimpey North Yorkshire Ltd. on

01642 626200

or at ipay@georgewimpey.co.uk



George Wimpey

COACH AND BUS WEEK

is published by Rouncy Media,
First Floor, 3 The Office Village,
Cygnet Park, Hampton,
Peterborough PE7 8FD

Switchboard 01733 293240

Fax 0845 280 2927

Web www.cbwnet.co.uk

EDITORIAL

Editor Mark Williams

01733 293243, mob 07720 769869
mark.williams@rouncymedia.co.uk

Technical and Minibus Editor

Martin Cole 01733 293245,

mob 07885 692144

martin.cole@rouncymedia.co.uk

News Editor Andrew Peace

01733 293244

andrew.peace@rouncymedia.co.uk

Art Director Keith Simpson

01733 293240

keith.simpson@rouncymedia.co.uk

Designer Louise Sayer

01733 293481

louise.sayer@rouncymedia.co.uk

Office Manager Jacqui Grobler

01733 293240

jacqui.grobler@rouncymedia.co.uk

CONTRIBUTORS

Gabriel Conway (Eire) 0879 222070

Andrew Jarosz (North) 01132 566505

William Golden (Tourism)

william.golden@virgin.net

ADVERTISING

Advertising Manager

Kirsty Flatt 01733 293246

kirsty.flatt@rouncymedia.co.uk

Display Sales

Gary Kemp 01733 293247

gary.kemp@rouncymedia.co.uk

Classified Sales

Beth Foster 01733 293480

beth.foster@rouncymedia.co.uk

James Walton 01733 293249

james.walton@rouncymedia.co.uk

PUBLISHING

Director Derek Phillips 01733 293240

derek.phillips@rouncymedia.co.uk

Director Andy Sutcliffe 01733 293242

andrew.sutcliffe@rouncymedia.co.uk

Publisher Stephen Curtis

01733 293240

stephen.curtis@rouncymedia.co.uk

SUBSCRIPTIONS

UK 0870 830 4969

Overseas + 44 1858 438782

CBW Subscriptions, Tower House,
Sovereign Park, Market Harborough,
Leics. LE16 9EF

Full annual subscription rate for 51 issues:
UK £69, Europe/Eire £115, USA and rest of
the world £140

www.cbwnet.co.uk

ISSN: 1351-3877

Printed by: William Gibbons & Sons

© 2006 Rouncy Media Ltd. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval or transmitted in any form or system or in any means without the written permission of the directors or editor. This is considered a breach of copyright and action will be taken where this occurs. This magazine must not be lent, sold, hired or otherwise disposed of in a mutilated condition or in any authorised cover by way, or by trade, or annexed to any publication or advertising matter without first obtaining written permission from the directors. Rouncy Media Ltd cannot accept responsibility for unsolicited manuscripts, photographs or other material.

Current events

As an example of organisational excellence, the annual conference run by the Scottish Council of the Confederation of Passenger Transport takes some beating.

This year's bash – once again at sumptuous Gleneagles – offered some excellent speakers, one of the liveliest debating sessions I can remember, and several meals too many for a middle-aged journalist. Above all, it was a useful networking session.

From my point of view, spending an evening in the company of the industry's suppliers is time well-spent. I get to feel the pulse of the operating industry by proxy, their mood determined by operators' willingness or ability to spend their money. There are few sadder sights than an underemployed salesman nursing half a lager in the corner of the bar...

Unfortunately, the way the big events are going, this is liable to become a more common sight. Take the Coach Tourism Council/Bonded Coach Holidays Conference a few weeks back – 120 delegates, but only 22 coach operators represented. I am told the atmosphere at the UK Coach Rally was lacking, and wherever I look I see a diminishing appetite for what's on offer.

It appears to me that either the recipe for the annual crop of events is wrong, or apathy has set in. Whichever it is, it's a certainty that if operators don't support these events by attending, suppliers who pour hundreds of thousands into them will choose other ways to spend their marketing budget. And without the support, those events will wither and die.

The sad truth is that I see the same faces year in, year out. I am bound to say they are among the finest operators in the UK, and I suspect those two facts are connected. It's the kiss of death for any business to operate in complete isolation from its competitors.

Please, make a point of attending an event or two this year, especially if it will be your first. And if you don't get enough out of it, tell the organisers what YOU want.



Mark Williams

Mark Williams
Editor

Coach and Bus Week is a supporter of the following organisations:



Contents

Golden Boy

We take a look at Golden Boy's Hertfordshire-based premises **page 22**

Liberal Way

Liberal Democrat shadow Transport Secretary Alistair Carmichael explains Liberal policy **page 30**

Scottish CPT

Editor Mark Williams travels to Gleneagles for the CPT's Scottish Conference **page 10**

CV Show

Martin Cole takes a look round this year's CV Show **page 35**

PCV Insight

Keeping drivers out of the 'dock' **page 28**

Regulars

News	4
Regional News	14
Tour News	16
Legal News	18
Open Platform	20
Inbox	21
Deliveries	38
Recruitment	39
Classified	40
Last Stop	47

TfL's new boss

Go-Ahead's London chief executive joins TfL as managing director of surface transport

The long awaited replacement for Peter Hendy as TfL's managing director of surface transport has been announced. David Brown, currently chief executive of Go-Ahead Group's London General and London Central and advisor to the main board, will take over the post in the summer.

As well as London Buses, as managing director of Surface Transport, he will be responsible for: Streets Management; the Congestion Charge; Taxi and Private Hire Licensing; London Trams; Dial-a-Ride; London River Services; Victoria Coach Station and TfL's corporate interest in Transport Policing and Enforcement.

Mr Brown says: "The passenger growth on London's buses has been phenomenal over the last few years and my job is to ensure that this continues and that the quality of operation improves even further.

"I am excited by the broad range of my new job and how the various components, when brought together, will bring improved transport provision for Londoners."

His old boss, Chris Moyes, chief executive of the Go-Ahead Group, says: "It is with regret that we are losing David as chief executive for London General and London Central. However, we are delighted that someone of David's calibre and commitment to quality will be leading one of the world's largest urban transport systems as managing director of London's Surface Transport." Go-Ahead says it will announce his successor in the near future.



David Brown

Mr Brown has 23 years' experience of transport in London and began his career as a trainee with London Transport in 1983. During this time he undertook a variety of roles including conductor, bus driver and inspector, and he was later the general manager for a number of bus depots in west London.

In 1994 he was part of the MBO team which purchased CentreWest, one of the subsidiary companies of London Buses, on privatisation. He then became, in 1996, the managing director of the Berks Bucks Bus Company. He moved back into London full time as operations director for London Central/London General in 1998.

He was a member of the London First Roads Group looking at better management of the road network in London and has also taken an active interest in the policing of transport and the relationship with the Metropolitan Police Service, both issues will be key areas of responsibility in his new job at TfL.

New Chair for PTE group

Roy Wicks, director general of South Yorkshire PTE, has been named as the next chair of the Passenger Transport Executive Group (pteg). Previous chair Rob Donald is retiring.

He says: "In the last few years pteg has raised its game and its profile. With the forthcoming Comprehensive Spending

Review, and the government taking a fresh look at how transport can best be governed and organised in the city regions, there are now some big opportunities for pteg to win a better deal for passengers."

Mr Wicks has been director general of SYPTA since 1998.

He started his career in highways design, traffic management and transport planning before joining Metro as rail and transport development manager in 1989. He has a degree in civil engineering, is a member of the Institute of Civil Engineers and has a Masters in transportation.



All eyes will be on Bath on Monday May 15 when traffic commissioner Philip Brown holds a public inquiry on Bath and North East Somerset's application for a Traffic Regulation Order, to allow them to regulate sightseeing services in the city. The TRO would give them the power to regulate timetables, emissions, noise and the number of vehicles operating, but not the power to force drivers to turn off engines while idling, the apparent source of many of the complaints from the public.

Cameron on the buses

Conservative leader David Cameron launched his "vote blue, go green" campaign last week, in the run-up to the local council elections. He says public transport has to be made a better alternative to the car.

He says: "We must give people, particularly those living in our towns and cities, serious travel options that don't involve the car... In areas with good public transport, people drive less. So we will be developing plans to bring about a dramatic improvement in the state of public transport in the UK. We recognise the need for radical thinking to provide cleaner, greener transport in our towns and cities."

London's Conservative Party has also re-launched its attack on the London Congestion Charge.

London Assembly Conservative spokeswoman Angie Bray says: "We continue to rigorously oppose both the Central Congestion Charging Zone and the Western Extension to Kensington and Chelsea. The C-Charge is not a green policy but rather an expensive failure, damaging shops and restaurants without having a significant effect on congestion levels."

Shadow secretary of state for transport Chris Grayling says: "Congestion charging in our cities is a matter for local politicians and not national ones. Conservatives in London have consistently opposed Livingstone's congestion charge."

■ See our exclusive interview this week with the Liberal Democrat Transport Secretary Alistair Carmichael, page 30.



Left to Right. Mike Weston, TfL director of operations. Ian Moore, MD Alexander Dennis (chassis). Jim Hastie, chief executive Alexander Dennis. Phil Margrave, engineering director, Go-Ahead London Central/General. Chris Moyes, chief executive, Go-Ahead group. David Brown, chief executive Go-Ahead London. Clive Hodgson, sales director, Alexander Dennis.

Environmental bus first for London

By David Crawford

On Saturday [May 6], the UK's first double-deckers designed to meet the EC's enhanced Euro IV emissions standards are due to start running in South London, as the latest additions to Go-Ahead Group member London General's fleet. Euro IV, which enforces a step change in particulates and nitrogen oxide (NOx) reduction, will apply to all new registrations from October 2006.

The 39 Enviro400 vehicles, manufactured by Alexander Dennis Ltd (ADL), are the first to pass Transport for London's (TfL's) own emissions test cycle, which aims to cut air pollution in the capital's densely-developed urban environment. TfL officials are warning that already-registered vehicles that do not meet rising environmental standards will

face cost penalties.

The first 15 buses will run on route 196 (between Norwood Junction and the Elephant & Castle), followed in June by the remaining 24 on route 37 (between Peckham and Putney Station). They are equipped with engines jointly developed by ADL in a multi-million pound joint venture with chosen partner Cummins.

Their development, says ADL sales manager Andy Boulton, has meant "a complete review, with Cummins, of all engine issues - including those which meant that emissions in reductions were not matched by reductions in fuel consumption". Field trials have involved test vehicles covering more than 240,000km over 45 months.

The resulting ISBe 250ps engine uses selective catalytic

reduction (SCR) to dispense with the need for special particulate traps, saving some £3,000 per vehicle. ADL claims the new buses will generate 18% fewer CO₂ emissions, almost halve NOx pollutants and cut fuel use by 18%, as compared with Euro3-compliant buses which make up more than 60% of TfL's fleet.

Go-Ahead uses 100 million litres of diesel a year and Group CEO Chris Moyes welcomed ADL's 'taking up the challenge of reducing fuel consumption as well as emissions' at a handover last week. He was taking delivery of a batch of four buses from ADL CEO Jim Hastie at a ceremony outside the currently-closed London's Transport Museum.

The Enviro400 bus can carry up to 80 passengers. Safety features include a 10-camera CCTV array, linked to a stairwell-located plasma screen which enables passengers to see what is happening throughout the bus, and built-in fire suppression.

An automatic air-chill system cools the upper deck when the outside temperature reaches 22°C. The design can accommodate on-board real-time passenger information (RTPI) systems if required, says Boulton.

Briefly

An eight-year-old girl was killed after being hit by an Arriva bus at Toowyn, Wales, at the weekend. The accident happened at 22:15 on Saturday night. There have been similar accidents on that stretch of road in the past.

A police officer in Gloucestershire was banned from using buses because his bosses had not carried out a Health & Safety assessment. Gloucs Police says it has a duty of care, and that buses interfere with communications equipment.

Tavish Scott, Scottish transport minister, is in the news for not taking part in the Stepchange programme, where high-profile figures keep a travel diary. The exercise aims to identify car journeys that could have been taken by public transport, walking or cycling. He claims 'diary commitments', and says he will take part in the future.

Residents of Chepstow Road in Westbourne Grove, London, are complaining that vibrations from passing deckers are bad enough to shake crockery off shelves. The problems started two years ago when new vehicles were allocated to the route. Residents say they are only able to sleep between 12-5am. TfL says it will try quieter hybrid buses.

A task group set up to review school transport in Anglesey has recommended increasing use of CCTV and escorts to target problem routes, and the phasing out of double deckers. It also suggested rotating the buses equipped with CCTV around the routes on a regular basis.

Drivers using the dedicated Fastway bus lanes in Surrey will now face fines of up to £1,000 if they are caught. The council will now repaint some of the lanes red to increase visibility.

Transport Museum's plans

Companies such as ADL and Go-Ahead could be invited to host special evenings at the re-opened London Transport Museum to show how they would reshape the city for better people movement. Director Sam Mullins floated the idea when he updated guests at last week's Enviro400 handover on the Museum's £19 million remodelling.

Due for completion in June 2007, this will create new 'Futures' and 'Coming soon to London' galleries focussing on 2012 Olympics plans, and technologies including new fare payment and passenger information methods. Sponsors include ADL, Arriva London, EvoBus (UK), First Group, London Central/ London General (Go-Ahead Group), Metrolink, National Express Group, Stagecoach in London, Transdev, Volvo Bus and Wrightbus.

Briefly

A survey by the Better Payment Practice Group – a public/private sector organisation – says that industry is becoming less tolerant of late payment. It says that one in six companies would now terminate their contracts with customers who pay late. Sixteen percent say they would terminate after one late payment. Two-thirds say they would stop working with customers who pay late between one and four times. A quarter of small companies (employing between 10 and 49) would terminate a contract after one late payment. Small firms are owed an estimated £50bn/month. Late payment contributes to 10–15,000 business failures per year.

The latest Welsh Assembly figures say funding to local authorities to support local transport services rose 9%, to over £27m in 2005. Direct central government expenditure on roads and transport in Wales increased 13% to £177m, while local authority capital expenditure on roads and transport was £141m in 2004/05.

TfL, First and the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) have come together to launch Operation Safer Buses in Bromley. MPS officers, Police Community Support Officers and plain-clothed police will be patrolling routes in the area, to deter anti-social behaviour. The patrols will be supported by TfL's Revenue Protection Inspectors. The operation runs until May 12, from 12:00 to 22:00.

MOT Test garages were unable to issue computer certificates last week after the latest glitch in VOSA's computer system. The system was rolled out in March after being delayed for over two years. A VOSA spokeswoman says that tests would not be affected, and paper certificates could be issued as before.



Two people suffered minor injuries when this First Group articulated bus crashed through a bakery window in Leeds. There were no passengers on board at the time. Witnesses told the BBC that the bus was turning, hit the kerb and then hit the shop. First says it is investigating the cause of the accident, and cannot say if it was down to driver error or mechanical failure.

Axed route angers council

Tempers on the coast were stretched to near breaking point last week after Dorset County Council lambasted the conduct of the Wilts & Dorset Bus Company in de-registering some services in Poole.

From June, Wilts & Dorset will reorganize its network in the city, resulting in a 6% cut in services. But the axing of one service in particular, to Corfe Mullen, an area on the north eastern edge of Poole conurbation, has angered councillors the most. They say the area is now totally without bus services and that Wilts & Dorset did not give them enough time to organize replacements.

Meanwhile, Wilts & Dorset says the statement from Dorset County Council contained sensitive commercial information regarding the level of passenger journeys on the route, which is run by two drivers and one vehicle.

In a further twist, it has emerged that because the route is a mixture of commercial and supported services, Wilts & Dorset should have given a longer notice period.

David Dawkins, the council's transportation policy manager,



Wilts & Dorset Bus Company is facing criticism for cutting routes

was quoted in the council's statement as saying: "Wilts and Dorset has been hinting at bus service changes in this area, but I was extremely disappointed by the extent of the cuts which, in particular, remove bus services from Corfe Mullen in the shortest possible timeframe.

"Dorset County Council has faced price increases on several of its contracted bus services in recent months which were well above the rate of inflation. Many of these extra costs have come from Wilts and Dorset.

"So we are seeing both large price increases and a contraction of services from one of the leading bus companies

in Dorset. It's a situation which is clearly unsustainable and seriously undermines public confidence."

But the error in giving the correct notice allowed the council to change the terms of the de-registration. It let the de-registration stand as long as it runs until July and that Wilts & Dorset bear any costs over and above the Council's normal £27,000 subsidy.

Andrew Wickham, Wilts & Dorset operations manager told CBW he was not happy that the statement had contained sensitive information, and said that he had held talks with the council about Corfe Mullen services.

A statement from him says: "With the new agreement everybody wins. There is no additional cost to the taxpayer, Corfe Mullen residents can still use our services and we will hope not to continue to meet the substantial losses we have absorbed for many years."

Despite his comments, Mr Dawkins told CBW he expects Wilts & Dorset to tender for the new service in July, and does not rule out them winning it.

Plymouth favours rapid transport

Plymouth City Council has put the results of a study into public transport in the city's Eastern Corridor up for consultation.

It says that all its options are open, but its preferred option is a Bus Rapid Transit system that takes advantage of disused railway lines.

What vehicle would be used, and who would operate them is also open for discussion. Services in the city

are presently operated by the creators of the BRT 'ftr' project, First Group, and Plymouth Citybus (see below).

Cllr Sue Dann, cabinet member for Transport, says: "These plans are the first stage in starting discussions with residents and road users to look at how we can provide a road network from the east fit for everybody's needs."

Residents regularly complain about congestion and a lack of quality public transport.

The consultation will last for six weeks. If the plans are approved, the city will then apply for up to £60m in government funding for the entire project.

£1.1m bus lane row

A row has broken out in Newcastle over plans for a new 350-metre bus lane that will cost over £1.1m to install.

The road will have to be widened and gas mains and electricity and phone cables moved to accommodate the new lane, on St Mary's Place.

The council's opposition leader Cllr John O'Shea says: "It's scandalous. I'm generally in favour of measures to tackle traffic congestion and promote public transport. But the benefits must be clearly demonstrated and must provide value for money. I question whether this achieves either. It's costing a fortune and we are losing green space. I can think of better ways to spend £1m, including on tackling congestion and improving the environment."

Approval for the scheme was obtained from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. Lib Dem Cllr Wendy Taylor, executive member for environment and sustainability says: "This is one of the busiest bus routes in the city used by around 6m passengers a year, but it is heavily congested and people are suffering serious delays. We are concerned about the cost but it works out at 15p per passenger in the first year and I believe it represents value for money." The work starts soon and is expected to take six months to complete.

First in acquisition talks

Marc Reddy, new managing director of First Devon and Cornwall, has admitted that First Group has been in talks with Plymouth City Council about buying Plymouth Citybus company.

He told the *Plymouth Evening Herald*: "First Group is the largest surface transport operator in the UK. We're always looking to make acquisitions. We would be interested if the opportunity arose." The Council is currently engaged on a review of its assets. But Mr Reddy says his first priority is to get the company's finances back on track: "One of the things we need to do is bring the company back to a profitable position. It's fundamental for the for the area and its economy."

Latest accounts show First Devon and Cornwall lost £2.7m for the year ended March 31 2005. Mr Reddy revealed he would be getting behind the wheel himself to meet customers face to face.

Death driver case latest

A court in South Wales has heard shocking testimony in the case of minibus driver Christopher Cushing.

He was the driver of the minibus which crashed in Hafodryns, near Crumlin, Wales in May 2005, killing Jasmine Allen, 12.

Other children on board the P-registered LDV minibus, operated by A1 Minibuses, have testified that Cushing was driving too fast, and attempting to scare a passenger by moving the wheel from side to side. Cushing says the crash was caused by a mechanical defect.

Passenger Chrissy Vickery, 17, told the court the driver was: "messaging around and swerving with the wheel."

Prosecutor Caroline Rees said: "Having pretended to mess about, Cushing lost control."

But the witness admitted that her view had been obscured and escort Eileen Arthur told the court she had



Driver Christopher Cushing

not been concerned about Cushing's driving until the bus swerved to the right. She said: "I felt the bus swerve and I asked Chris what was happening and he said he didn't know."

The minibus crossed three lanes of traffic before colliding with a car and turning over.

Cushing was charged with causing death by dangerous driving, but claimed there was something wrong with the steering, and that there were stones on the road. The trial was postponed from March while VOSA carried out further mechanical checks on the vehicle. But the hearing was told that examinations showed it was in perfect working order.

The owner of A1 Minibuses, Jason Brewer, was fined £1,000 for allowing Cushing to drive the vehicle without the correct licence and insurance. The company has since closed. The trial continues.

New Euro IV Vario 'soon'

The future of the Vario is secured, following the news that Mercedes-Benz will take the range to Euro IV after all.

The classic body shape is untouched, although there are detail changes, and a completely new interior.

The first details, but no photographs, were released by Mercedes-Benz last week after the CV Show in Birmingham.

The most powerful engine now develops 177bhp, and an astonishing 675Nm of torque. The engine is the

same OM 904 LA series 4-cylinder turbodiesel unit as in the previous generation, but fitted with Mercedes' BlueTec SCR technology to meet Euro IV. Two other variants produce 129 hp (500 Nm) and 156 hp (610 Nm).

Mercedes-Benz claims better fuel economy for the 'BlueTec' engines, which all have a capacity of 4.25 litres, electronic engine management, three valves per cylinder and pump-line-nozzle injection technology with dedicated unit pumps for each cylinder.

All Vario models now come with a six-speed manual transmission as standard. A five-speed (previously four-speed) automatic is available as an option, and is now available with all output ratings.

Exterior changes are apparently limited to new wheel arch covers, but the interior has been completely made over. It has new door trim, with integrated stowage pockets, and the instrument panel now has a two-tone black and grey finish. The interior trims, the roof liner and the upholstery fabrics have also all been revised.

STOP PRESS



Ford's new Transit received its official launch last week at the CV Show in Birmingham and it was followed up immediately by a ride and drive presentation in Frankfurt. Changes to the Transit are extensive. They incorporate a full redesign and a move to Euro IV emissions technology with completely new powertrains. Its new 2.2 and 2.4 litre DuraTorq engines, jointly developed with PSA, offer greater efficiency combined with high torque output. Ford has attempted to make the Transit more car-like to drive. See page 35 for more details.

Veolia's move

Veolia Transport UK has announced its latest acquisition, Welsh coach and bus operator Pullman Coaches of Penclawdd, Swansea.

The deal, for an undisclosed amount, further strengthens Veolia's presence in South Wales, having bought Bebb Travel in last October. It has also just finalised its purchase of Dunn-Line.

Their combined fleets now means Veolia Transport UK has built up a fleet of nearly 300 vehicles in just six months.

Charles Lewis, who founded Pullman Coaches in 1990, will remain as managing director. He says: "We

are delighted to now be part of Veolia Transport and the move will help us accelerate the development of Pullmans. I am very excited about helping the Veolia team grow the business here in Wales."

Pullman's 43-vehicle fleet operates on a mix of private hire and local authority contract work, which fits with Veolia's aim to acquire companies which generate a significant part of their income through contracted work.

John O'Brien, chairman of Veolia Transport UK, says: "Pullman Coaches fit perfectly with our intention to acquire quality businesses with strong local management and good potential for growth. Charles and Laura Lewis have built up an enviable reputation in the local area and, together with David Rees, bring a great deal of experience to our team."

For more information on Veolia Transport UK, see www.veolia-transport.info.



Northumbria Coaches, which lost out badly in a row over Kickstart funding recently, has bought its first double-deck coach. The Ayats Bravo will tackle a variety of tour work. The specification includes 75 reclining seats, toilet, air con, drinks machine, twin fridges, TV/DVD and a tow bar.

"We finally found two double-deck coaches in first class condition and which haven't been to the moon and back," says director Adrian Smith. "This is the first one and

we are in discussions for the second one." The coaches will be available to other operators to hire. The company says that being

based in the North East means it can and will pick up in most places in the UK. See www.northumbriacoaches.co.uk for more information.

OBITUARY

David Bates

David (Spot) Bates, senior partner of Scotland & Bates Coaches of Appledore, Kent, passed away on Wednesday April 26.

He worked alongside his brother Richard and sister-in-law Georgina, running the company that was formed by his father more than 60 years ago.

The company has grown steadily over the years and now operates a modern fleet of coaches for private hire and school work.

David reached retirement age last October and was looking forward to spending time in his garden when his illness unfortunately took a turn for the worse.

A memorial service will be held in Appledore church on Friday May 12 at 11:00am.



The fully accessible NatEx Plaxton/Volvo won admirers in Brussels

NatEx's accessible Plaxton

National Express took its new front-accessible Volvo Plaxton Panther to the COST 349 European scientific and technical research exhibition in Brussels last week.

The vehicle, owned by Parks of Hamilton and due to start on the Inverness-Coventry service later this year, was also given the once over by the European Liberal Democrat Leader.

Bill Cahill, National Express operations director, says: "Several British MEPs and other dignitaries at

the exhibition in Brussels were very impressed. This solution meets our requirements to ensure the best results for our disabled customers, and we are happy to have a second solution following the Caetano Levante."

Graham Watson, European leader of the Liberal Democrats, says: "This coach continues the welcome trend towards full accessibility in all services throughout Europe... it is high time that all those providing a service take their lead from National Express and implement easy and equal access."

The 15-vehicle deal with National Express is worth £2m to Plaxton. National Express says it will put 100 easy access vehicles into service in the next two years. It aims to make the whole network accessible by the 2012 Olympics, in a £100m investment.

Caetano's Levante won the 'Top Dual-Purpose Vehicle' and the Clarke's Trophy for the coach offering the best access for the disabled at last weekend's UK Coach Rally.

EuroRider breaks cover

Eagre Coaches has finally taken delivery of the first Beulas Cygnus EuroRider, six months after it was first seen at Coach and Bus Live.

The Lincs-based company, which has spent £2m on seven new Beulas in seven years, told local newspapers that the vehicle has been under wraps since the show last October.

The £240,000 coach features climate control, drinks facilities, toilet, CD/DVD, 430bhp and a 12-speed automatic gearbox.

Rob Eaglen, Eagre managing director, says: "We have completely replaced our eight-strong fleet of luxury tourers since 1999.

"This model was the first to arrive in this country. Beulas wanted it in our livery at the coach show and it's been in storage ever since."

Eagre sold its 20-vehicle bus business to Lincs RoadCar saying it wanted to concentrate on coach tours and holiday packages.



Eagre's much-anticipated EuroRider

Theatre guide

The CPT in conjunction with TfL, the London Boroughs of Camden and Westminster, and the Society of London Theatres (SOLT), has produced a guide to theatres in the eastern section of London's Theatreland. If successful, the guide will be expanded to include the whole of the area.

The guide shows all coach set-down and pick-up areas, and has information on the new coach bays in Russell Street and The Strand.

CPT's coaching consultant Bob Pilbeam says: "This is a great example of what can be achieved, and we look forward to the next stage."

Darek Podwiazka, TfL's coach manager, says: "TfL supports this initiative and is delighted to be involved by featuring it on our website: www.tfl.gov.uk/vcs/coach-parking/theatreland-parking.shtml.

WORLD



German Chancellor Angela Merkel (right) and Indian Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh (centre) witness the signing

Neoman joins Forces

German Chancellor Angela Merkel – looking tanned and fresh following a holiday in Tenerife – was present at the signing of a deal between Neoman Bus Group and the Indian bus manufacturer Force Motors. The Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh also attended the signing, at the Indo-German Business Summit in Hanover.

The joint venture between MAN and Force will set up the development, production and marketing of chassis and complete buses for both brands in India and Asia.

In the medium term production should reach 4,000 vehicles a year, starting for the Indian market at the end of 2007, and in 2008 for the Asian market. In India the vehicles are to be marketed by the joint venture, and outside by MAN. There are no plans to export to Europe.

Volvo results

Volvo says the world bus and coach market is "developing favourably" as it posted a 31% sales increase and increased profits.

After currency movements, net sales increased by a still impressive 21%. Operating income jumped to SEK131m (£9.75m) from SEK32m (£2.4m), and the operating margin increased to 3.1%, from 1%. Order bookings also show an increase, up 11% over last year when adjusted for the 1,800 bus order from Santiago, Chile.

Volvo is recording strong sales in South America again this year with orders for 240 coaches in Mexico, 220 city buses to Caracas, Venezuela and

60 bi-articulated buses to Curitiba, Brazil. Overall it says market development in South America is favourable.

Volvo also delivered its first city buses to Bangalore, and signed a supplementary order for 300 city buses to Shanghai, China for delivery before August 2006. It says the market in India is level, and rising in China, particularly for smaller city buses.

Volvo says the market in North America is being stimulated by operators buying new vehicles before the introduction of new emissions controls in 2007. The European market grew by just 1% although the company says it shows "signs of continued growth."

The company expects to take a hit this coming quarter as it starts production of its new Euro IV/V products.

Briefly

Optima Bus Corporation has won a \$178m contract to build 300 Opus buses for Miami-Dade County, with an option for 300 more. "This is the largest 30-foot bus contract ever," says Michael Monteferrante, Optima chief executive. The company will appoint 70 more workers on the back of the contract. It is also reconfiguring its plant in Wichita to produce 40- and 60-foot buses. Production of a hybrid starts next year.

The first bus manufacturing unit in the United Arab Emirates has opened in Abu Dhabi. Trans-Continent Industrial has announced that its 220,000 sq ft factory will initially produce 300 buses a year, with scope to expand to 1,000 a year.

A Jamaican minibus driver is in trouble for threatening to dump his passengers in the middle of a crime-infested suburb of Kingston close to midnight unless they gave him extra money. He stopped the bus and demanded \$20, on top of the usual \$50.

High oil prices in the United States seem to be having a positive effect on public transport ridership figures: Houston has seen a 10% rise in the last year while Los Angeles bus passengers have increased by 7% in the first quarter of 2006 alone. The price of petrol has risen by 42 cents in the past month nationally, to over \$3 a gallon.

Virginia State Police say a bus driver who died at the wheel had an apparent medical emergency, causing him to flop out of the window and smash his head on a bridge support. Motorists called police after they saw 49-year-old David Audet hanging out of the driver's side window, with the bus veering off the road. Then Audet's head hit a barrier and a bridge column but the bus kept going for about a half mile before police brought the bus to a halt.

Souter dismisses big mergers

Stagecoach boss tells Scottish conference to rule out any takeovers within the Big Five

Stagecoach chief executive Brian Souter has dismissed further consolidation of the UK bus groups.

Speaking at the Confederation of Passenger Transport Scottish Council's annual conference, Souter raised eyebrows by describing his "dream merger" with Go-Ahead group.

"I'd love to merge with Go-Ahead. We could get synergies in Oxford, Gateshead, Brighton, reduce administration... but we've got a snowball's chance," he said. "We can't do such a merger because of the eventual size of the group, and if we reach 25% of the market, we'd have to start divesting."

Souter said small bus companies are being started all the time, but there were few medium- to large-sized operators left to target. Joking about one of the few, East Yorkshire Motor Services, he said: "The only way we'll get Peter Shipp [EYMS chairman] out is to send him to Valhalla - pushed out into the Humber on a blazing VR!"

Souter's comments came during a wide-ranging panel discussion chaired by BBC correspondent Louise Batchelor. One of the panellists, Scottish traffic commissioner Joan Aitken, endorsed the new driver 'CPC' training requirement, saying that it would improve further the professionalism of operators.

"I have great admiration for the industry. I see complacency on the wane. The CPC for drivers is a good thing. It adds to the appreciation of their role. But we also need to find ways to value mechanics. I am getting very worried about the quality of mechanics and their supervisors, to the extent that small companies can't find good maintenance staff."

In his introductory address, Transport Scotland's chief executive Dr Malcolm Reed told delegates that

although the headline figures for bus ridership growth in Scotland looked good, they are giving a misleading picture: "Behind the figures are some worrying trends," he said. "The only growth in is the Lothian region and even then, the growth in ridership is matched by a growth in bus mileage."

"I ask myself how we reach that generation who have grown up with a car in the drive. In Scotland, car ownership is low but car use is growing fast. How do you get the message across to people that there has been a sea change in bus use?"

We can't get the competition authorities to recognise that the car is the main competitor for the bus

Brian Souter

"Ask bus users what they think about services and you get an 85% satisfaction response. You get the opposite from people who never use the bus."

John Elliot from Traveline Scotland raised the issue of competition policy, which he said has detracted from 'joined up' services: "If the competition issues are local by nature, should the competition policy be made in Westminster or devolved to the Scottish Executive?" he asked.

Brian Souter accused the competition authorities of some 'shocking' decisions: "The system certainly needs some consistency. The competitions authorities have become absolutely





infatuated with rail franchises and spend enormous amounts of money examining them.

"I was shocked by some of the referrals. Some would say the referral of Citylink-Megabus [who merged] has been absurd. We can't get the competition authorities to recognise that the car is the main competitor for the bus. The situation needs an outbreak of common sense."

Phil White, chief executive of the National Express Group, backed Souter's comments: "In 10 years our group has been referred eight times at a cost to us of £10 million, and each time we have come out clean."

"In one instance, to get ScotRail we had to dispose of Citylink. That was the worse decision of my career, and I really regret it. We sold a business we owned for one we didn't."

"I have been in a situation where we have been named the preferred bidder, then referred to the competitions people. There is no joined-up

thinking."

Marjory Roger, director of public relations for the CPT in Scotland, asked the panel how bus operators actually get local authorities involved in Quality Partnerships, and was told that many had not yet caught up with changes in their role.

"It's partly history," said Dr Malcolm Reed. "Local government feels less engaged."

John Ewing, head of transport for the Scottish Executive, agreed: "I think they are struggling to find their role. Traditionally they are used to specifying and controlling or procuring. My sense is that this is still a big area of suspicion."

"Also the local authorities can be stretched. I am hoping Scotland's new Regional Transport Partnership will enable them to engage. Don't forget they are in the front line getting all the barracking."

Phil White was less charitable: "But local transport is all about local >

Above: Gleneagles hosted the 2006 CPT Scottish Conference.

Left: from right to left: Traffic Commissioner Joan Aitkin, CPT president Phil White, Stagecoach chief executive Brian Souter

authorities, local companies and local people. Dundee works, but elsewhere there's this incessant regulation debate that ignores the passenger. The whole thing is blighted by politics and profits."

Dr Reed said there was a long history of "people talking different languages." He said that operators were no better and that the last thing their managers wanted to do is talk to the local council.

"The question of how we engage is difficult for us," said Souter. "Road control is still in the hands of local authorities. If we don't take ownership of this we won't make a grain of progress."

Souter appealed to the conference organisers to consider broadening the attraction so that local authorities would attend so that the industry could get more of its best ideas across to councils, and make some headway.

"To make progress in Manchester we have to speak to the PTE, then the PTA, then the key councils, then Stockport, then the MPs, who are all fanatical about re-regulation," he told conference. "If the government wants statutory Quality Partnerships, the only way is to get the highways into the equation. Thanks to congestion, our reliability is getting worse every year."

Accessible market summed up

In almost his swansong, Alexander Dennis commercial director David Quainton - who retires this year - traced the history of accessible buses and coaches since 1994.

"The change has caused angst in the industry," said Quainton. "What started in 1994 in 1998 resulted in regulations that demanded better accessibility for

In one instance, to get ScotRail we had to dispose of Citylink. That was the worse decision of my career, and I really regret it. We sold a business we owned for one we didn't

Phil White



Speakers at the CPT's Scottish Conference. Clockwise from above: Scottish Transport Minister Tavish Scott MSP. Coach operator Margaret Jackson from Marbills. Dennis commercial director David Quainton traced the history of accessible buses and coaches. CPT president Phil White had his tongue firmly in his cheek as he wondered how the industry would cope with running Tesco



buses. From January 1 of this year, regulation was also made for large coaches on scheduled services.

"It's been a laudable aspiration and some progress has been made, but to have all our fleet accessible by 2010 gives us just three years to have those vehicles in position."

He said that while lowfloor registrations had been keeping pace, many were going into London, which now has 8,000 lowfloor buses: "The further you go into rural areas, the less accessible buses you will find.

"But to reach the target for a fully lowfloor fleet, the market would have to sustain 2,400 new units a year, bearing in mind that the orders from London will be missing."

Quainton said the key will be investment in development of buses which don't just cater for wheelchairs but have broad appeal: "One of the best examples is Wrightbus's Streetcar - it's street theatre, and heightens awareness of the product."

He said the success of the lowfloor bus solution was such that operators and manufacturers are now looking for way to resolve the "conflict" between wheelchair users and mums with buggies, who both want to use the wheelchair bay.

"Lowfloor double-deck has also been a challenge. Some early lowfloor 'decker designs had only 19 seats in the lower saloon. The latest ALX400 from ADL has 26 seats."

Quainton tracked the history of wheelchair-accessible coaches leading to the legislation which ensures that



If an operator took over Tesco...

National Express Group chief executive Phil White got delegates laughing when he faced operators with their own inadequacies.

Asking what would happen if a bus operator took over Tesco – which had just reported record profits – he drew comparisons in service by highlighting the worst of operating practise: “Would Tesco then have notices up saying ‘No Change. No Credit Cards’ and have its customers queuing outside in the rain with one till operating?” he said. “Would Tesco have spillages left in the aisles until after closing?”

“Would it organise its opening times to suit the rotas of its employees? And then have handwritten sheets of paper Sellotaped to the door explaining the new opening times?”

He then put a ‘Buy One, Get One Free’ image on the screen and said: “In supermarkets, that’s what it means, but in our new company BOGOF would mean just what it says on the tin; bog off.”

White reminded operators that they run a service industry, and service is what it is all about: “We

should think about how buses are perceived. Where the perception is poor and WE are wrong, we need to get things right. Where the perception is poor but the service is right, we need to change the perception.”

White showed a short documentary film by PhD student Luke Harmer, which shadowed a cyclist, car driver and bus passenger on their way to work and heard their attitudes to the bus. White then commented: “Bus users say we are quick and getting better, we are part of the scenery. To non-users we are slow, scummy, polluting, in the way, empty and full of unsavoury characters.”

Addressing the conference theme of Widen Access, he said it was not just about getting wheelchair users aboard: “It’s about making people believe buses can be the first choice,” he explained.

“It’s up to us to get the bus to say the right things loud and clear. We can do incredible things to get people on our buses, and many of the solutions lie in our own hands.

“Let’s be heroes, and work together to be the Tesco of transport.”

One of the best examples [of investment in development of buses which don’t just cater for wheelchairs but have broad appeal] is Wrightbus’s Streetcar – it’s street theatre”

David Quainton

all new vehicles for scheduled services must now have a lift. He said that as 70% of coaches are now imported, there had been little interest in coming up with solutions: “There was so little potential volume of sales,” he said.

“The prize customer was National Express, who together with its contracted operators replaces between 500 and 800 coaches a year.”

He mentioned the disastrous seven-vehicle experiment along the Bath-London corridor, and said that alternatives to the side lift had included Wrights’ Commuter with a wheelchair space in the front overhang, and the Plaxton’s front-door lift arrangement, which sold 80 vehicles between First and Stagecoach.

The development by Caetano of

the Levante – a slightly bigger front overhang to widen the entrance step and allowing PLS to build the ‘Magic Floor’ wheelchair lift – he said was “ingenious” and he also paid tribute to Van Hool’s wheelchair solution, built just behind the main passenger door.

“Plaxton was quick to realise the aesthetics of the Magic Floor arrangement, and everyone appreciates the super-width door. Wootens bought seven coaches with the provision for the lift, and there is talk of making super-width doors the standard.”

But, Quainton warned, weight is the issue: “It’s 400kg to fit the lift. Now we have coaches with Euro IV which could add the weight of the AdBlue and tank.”

He said that at 14 tonnes, a coach has only four tonnes payload to include fuel, water and lubricants: “At 10 stones per person, that leaves only 7 kg for luggage – the kind of weight similar to Frank Carter’s wallet,” he joked, referring to the former Yorkshire Traction director who sold his business recently.

Quainton said that a recent cost analysis in Europe had shown that to equip the entire coach fleet with wheelchair lifts would be so unaffordable as to require fiscal support or risk operators closing.

Carter causes a stir

Announcing himself as ‘Frank Carter, pensioner’ the former boss of Yorkshire Traction asked the panel for their suggestions of how to deal with anti-social passengers.

“There’s an operator in the south who has a two plus one seating plan in his vehicles, and the single seats are occupied almost immediately. Is there anything we can do to get people to share the double seat?”

The BBC presenter Louise Batchelor said she noticed that young men are the worst for taking one of the pair of seats and making it awkward for anyone else to sit beside them. Phil White said National Express coaches’ answer was to sell the second seat for £5 so single passengers could buy some privacy.

Brian Souter admitted that he’s among those who avoid the close proximity of another passenger: “I like a certain amount of space,” he said.

“The move from the bench seat to separate seats has been a big help, but not for big people. On bench seats, they weren’t as aware of the overhang...” ●

Regional News

CBW takes a look at the big issues where you live in our round-up of the regions. If you've got a local issue you would like us to cover, contact Andrew Peace at andrew.peace@rouncymedia.co.uk

N. IRELAND

An MP in Northern Ireland says pensioners in the province are being discriminated against because they do not qualify for free travel until the age of 65. People in mainland UK can take up the concessionary pass from age 60.

"Why are the people in Northern Ireland not entitled to the same rights as other British citizens," says East Antrim MP **Sammy Wilson**. "It is disgraceful that pensioners in our part of the country do not qualify for free travel until five years after their counterparts in England, Scotland and Wales. I have asked the government to amend this anomaly."

He says the government will be reviewing the situation shortly.

REP. IRELAND

Sporting stars from both sides of the border teamed up at Dublin Airport on April 20 to mark the launch of revamped Dublin-Belfast service by **Translink** and Bus Éireann.

Ulster Rugby star, David Humphreys and All-Ireland medal winner and GAA Allstar, Stephen McDonnell of Armagh officially launched the new hourly coach service, which replaced a more limited service operated previously. The new coach service operates the same timetable seven days a week from 6am to 9pm daily.

Philip O'Neill Translink's General Manager Bus Services said: "The Goldline Express 200 service links Belfast and Dublin seven days a week. There has been a significant increase in

passenger numbers travelling between the two cities both for business and leisure purposes over the past few years. An increased number of holiday makers from Northern Ireland fly from Dublin Airport to warmer climates. the service will also facilitate travel for shopping trips, concerts, sporting events and business meetings. The service provides a reliable and cost-effective alternative to the private car."

WALES

The introduction of the **StreetCar** to Swansea in late 2007 is already causing controversy. The council consulted on the proposed route for the 'Swansea Metro' scheme last November, but as the start of the road infrastructure alterations gets closer protestors are coming out of the woodwork. The track will come from the north of the city to the centre and then out westwards to the Mumbles.

The Civic Society and the Labour opposition are both voicing opposition to the plan to convert one of the city's main routes to a one-way road for cars, to accommodate a two-way dedicated track for the fr.

"We are totally in favour of public transport - we are just not sure the bendy bus is the right thing for Swansea," says a spokeswoman. The Labour party says: "Turning a major cross-city arterial road into a one-way street is going to have a major impact and we hope that it will be put out to wider consultation before any action is taken."

However, after a demonstration run by **First Group**, disabled campaigners



have reacted positively. The chairman of Disabled Drivers Swansea says: "As a wheelchair user I was very interested in the StreetCar and I must say I was very pleased with what I saw. StreetCars are a massive improvement on anything that has gone before."

Swansea Council is currently inviting tenders for the preparatory works to the **Kingsway**. This is programmed to commence in June and be completed the end of the year. It is hoped that the Metro will grow into a network of services criss-crossing the city. Swansea Council is to spend £2m this year on the first phase of the project.

NORTH

Stagecoach staff in Carlisle have written to the local newspaper warning about the potential for a serious accident on the city centre streets.

Since a crossing has been removed, pedestrians are climbing railings and weaving between traffic rather than use the crossing further down the street.

"We have grave concerns over the amount of disregard the public have towards their own safety in and around the city centre," the letter says. "As bus drivers we do care and at all times take all the precautions we can. But the situation is getting so out of hand that it is just a matter of time before a nasty incident and this is the last thing we want to be involved in."

The area is a notorious accident blackspot, with two fatal accidents in the past seven years.

Briefly

The Conservative leader of Hyndburn Council in Lancashire is accusing his rivals of dirty tricks in the run up to the local council elections. He is being accused of a conflict of interest for supporting keeping Accrington Bus Station in its present location while leasing a shop in a nearby street. He says the decision about where to house the station will be made by the County Council.

A 19-year old woman was held at knife point in Birmingham last week after being abducted from a bus queue. Police used a Taser gun to stun the man while they disarmed him. The woman escaped without serious injury.



Ulster rugby star David Humphreys (left) and GAA Allstar Stephen McDonnell

Briefly

Pensioner groups in Scotland are protesting over alleged delays in issuing concessionary bus passes, despite not disputing that 97.3% of passes have been issued. In Edinburgh 73,000 people have applied for the new pass, but "several hundred" are still waiting to receive their cards. The city council says pensioners will still be able to travel.

Bus drivers from Poland, and other Eastern European immigrants, are said to have kept interest rates low according to a report from auditors Ernst & Young. The estimated 300,000 immigrants have plugged gaps in many sectors, including public transport, and kept inflationary wage demands low, according to the report

Around 100 police, council officers and transport bosses attended a conference on crime on public transport organized by GMPTA last week. Councillor Roger Jones, GMPTA chairman says: "We want more and more people to use public transport, but we will only be able to encourage people out of their cars if they believe they will be safe."



The big guns from Metroline, Arriva, Stagecoach, First Group and Transport for London turned out for the unveiling of a new branded bus initiative on behalf of NSPCC last week. (L-R) Jaspal Singh from Metroline; Mark Yexley from Arriva; Barry Arnold from Stagecoach; Sophie Hutchinson from the NSPCC; Adrian Jones from First Group and Peter Hendy from Transport for London all gathered at Hyde Park to mark the official launch of the buses, nine out of 10 of which are already in service in London and Greater London.

EAST

The special offers on the **Norwich Orbital Bus** service, reported in *CBW* last month, may have rescued the service from closing.

The service, kickstarted by a government Urban Bus Challenge grant of £1.2m, was under threat because passenger numbers hovered around 1,000 per week. In March, the council unveiled a cheap fare offer, including free fares on Thursdays, which saw numbers jump to 2,150, well on course for its break-even threshold of 100,000 passengers per year.

Campaigners are now calling for increased frequency and real time passenger info to sustain patronage.

Following on from our news in brief item last week about wheelchair users in East Anglia complaining about the lack of accessible coaches, **First Group** would like to make it clear that they are committed to providing low floor vehicles in the area.

Pictured are three of its new low floor buses in Great Yarmouth where the major route is already 100% low floor. First says, "We have a programme to introduce as many low floor buses as is economic as we replace older stock. At a later stage we plan to introduce low floor coaches to help overcome the problem that you noted in your last issue where travellers in wheelchairs are disadvantaged. The policy of First Eastern Counties is that all of our passengers deserve a fair treatment, that includes all who may be elderly frail or less able. We plan to have a suitable fleet well ahead of the statutory requirement dates that will apply to coaches used on longer

distance routes."

Norwich's landmark new bus station is attracting more criticism, this time for the lack of 24 hour facilities.

The Central Norwich Citizen's Forum say the station should be made more welcoming to visitors, especially those arriving late at night on coaches from London airports. They say the council promised all-night facilities when plans were drawn up. The council says it will install vending machines, and that toilets will be included in a new building on the site due to open in spring 2007, which may become First Group's offices in the city.

The station has had a consistent run of bad publicity since its opening was delayed first by a worldwide shortage of steel for its twin canopy roofs, and then bad weather. It finally opened in August 2005, but hit the news in October when cab drivers protested at the lack of a taxi rank and local MP Charles Clarke intervened. Then last February bus drivers were complaining about congestion on roads leading to the station, making getting in and out difficult, and delayed services.



Three of the low floor buses introduced in Great Yarmouth by First

Roadworks

■ M74 Hamilton

Until May 12: Contraflow and roadworks on M74 both ways at J5 A725 (Raith Interchange).

■ M8 Renfrewshire

Until May 10: Slip road onto motorway closed and delays expected due to bridge maintenance work on M8 Eastbound at J28 (Glasgow Airport).

■ M56 Cheshire

Until April 30: Lane closed on exit slip road westbound at J7 A556 (Bowdon).

■ M1 South Yorkshire

Until May 5: Road surface repairs. Road closed from 21:30 to 06:00 between J30 and J31.

■ M1 Hertfordshire

Until December 31, 2008:

Speed restriction of 40 mph and narrow lanes both ways between J6A M25 and J10 M1 (Luton Airport).

■ M11 Essex

Until May 6: major resurfacing work between Newport and Henham. 24 hour 40mph speed limit, with safety cameras and off-peak contraflow

■ M5 North Somerset

Until July 31: Speed restriction both ways between J19 A369 (Portishead) and J20 B3133 (Clevedon).

■ A39 Somerset

Until May 21: Road closed due to roadworks on A39 both ways between B3135 and A37.

■ A38 West Midlands

Until June 19: Bassett's Pole Island. Closed for widening to three lanes from 20:00 until 06:00 weekends between May 19-May 22; June 2-June 5; June 9-June 12; and June 16-June 19.

■ M6 Staffordshire

Until June 30: Speed restriction of 40 mph due to resurfacing work on M6 Northbound between J12 A5 (Gailey) and J13 A449 (Stafford South).

In association with

trafficlink

www.trafficlink.co.uk



Holiday giant WA Shearings is targeting the over 50s with a wide range of winter breaks

Long-stay winter breaks from WA Shearings

Leading coach and air holiday operator WA Shearings is targeting the over 50s market by offering long stay winter sun breaks of up to eight weeks. The company has launched Golden Years, a new programme that forms part of the new Escape to Europe and Magic of Britain & Ireland brochures, which cover holidays from autumn 2006 to spring 2007.

Golden Years offers long stays in Spain, Tenerife, the Algarve, Cyprus and Malta. Holidays can be from one week to 56 nights and, as a price guide, a stay of 56 nights in Benidorm starts from £1,177 per person. The price includes return flights and full-board accommodation in a three-star hotel.

Also featured are 28 nights in Malta from £592 per person based in the three-star Hotel Plevna and 56 nights in Tenerife from £2,126 per person. The latter is based in the three-star Hotel Panorama in the Costa Adeje area of Playa de Las Americas.

Karen Gee, sales and marketing director at WA Shearings, said: "These holidays are perfect for retired people, who want the lifestyle benefits of spending winter abroad without the commitment of investing in overseas property."

The Escape to Europe brochure also showcases the range of Christmas Breaks

that include Continental Christmas Markets. A five-day tour of the Alsace region of France, taking in Colmar and Strasbourg, starts from £218 per person for departures on 27 November and December 4 and 11. This price includes bed and breakfast accommodation in a three-star hotel and three dinners. A single supplement is available from £45. Seven days in Prague over Christmas is available from £350 per person, including meals and excursions. Christmas and New Year holidays in Jersey feature traditional festive meals and entertainment ranging from cocktail parties to live music and exciting mystery tours around the island. Prices start from £402 per person for four nights at the Ambassadeur Hotel on a full board basis, including flights.

On the domestic front, five-day all-inclusive holidays in WA Shearings' own range of hotels are available in Scotland and Northern England. Prices start from £154 per person at the Highland Hotel in Strathpeffer, Scotland, including excursions and unlimited drinks at the hotel bar (price varies according to departure location). A shopping break in Dublin costs from £238 per person, including transport and four night's accommodation in a three-star hotel on a bed & breakfast basis. More details on www.washearings.com

The cream of Devon

Operators who want to get the best of the west should check out the new group organisers' guide, *Explore Exeter & The Heart of Devon*.

The guide gives details of attractions, hotel accommodation, meal stops and suggested itineraries. In Exeter groups can discover the history of the city on a tour led by a Red Coat Guide. There is a variety of walking tours or the guide can board the coach for a full tour of the area. Exeter is also a mecca for shoppers, with more than 700 retail outlets.

Heading out into the countryside, groups can visit the World Heritage Jurassic Coast, tour rugged Dartmoor and Exmoor and visit a wide variety of historic houses, castles, working museums and gardens.

There is a one-stop booking service that will help operators to organise a Red Coat Guide,

book a visit to the Quay House Visitor Centre, tailor itineraries to individual group needs, provide advice about accommodation and meal stops and give details of coach parking, set-down points and facilities for drivers.

Exeter City Council is running a day familiarisation trip on Wednesday, October 18, and a weekend trip from Friday to Sunday, October 20 to 22. For more details and a copy of the new guide, call Debbie Lewis, the councils' tourism promotion officer, on 01392 265204.

New Marriott group service

A new specialist central group desk has been set up by Marriott Hotels, which has moved to new offices in Luton, Bedfordshire.

Operators who want to find out about the latest deals and special offers should email: groupdesk.ltnch@marriott.com or contact Janet Large, specialist sales executive, on 08702 415018.

Inside guide to holidays in Northern Ireland

If you want to learn about touring opportunities it is generally a good idea to go to a local expert. Take Northern Ireland, which is rapidly becoming one of the top tourist destinations in the UK.

Led by the advance of Belfast as a destination, the area has much to offer groups. One company that has been helping to spread the word is Executive Travel, based in Derry. The operator was quick to spot that, after years of bad publicity, people were still reluctant to travel to the province. So the operator decided to introduce new measures to encourage more visitors.

Central to this was a package launched in 2004 that took visitors to both sides of the traditional divide and lay the foundations for a greater cross-border co-operation and encourage greater numbers

to travel. Keen to promote the city of Derry in particular and the north west in general, Executive Travel now offers packages from 5-8 days in duration and these cover the most popular parts of the north west, including Donegal.

The second year saw a 20% increase in numbers and the trend has been reflected in bookings in 2006. The all-inclusive package includes pick-up and drop-off at airports or ferry ports and accommodation on a half-board basis in three and four-star hotels in Derry city, together with entertainment.

On a six-day tour, there are full day excursions to destinations such as The Giants Causeway and the Bushmills Distillery, The Inishowen Peninsula & Doagh Island Famine Village and a half-day walking tour of the walled city of Derry.

Lucky 13 for light opera fans

Not at lot of people know this, but this year marks the 125th anniversary of the first performance of the Gilbert & Sullivan opera, *Patience*. To celebrate this milestone, the site of Gilbert's former home, the Grim's Dyke hotel in Harrow, will be attracting fans from all over the world as part of a year long presentation of all 13 Gilbert & Sullivan operas.

The Grim's Dyke Opera Company will perform the works in chronological order; the first time in over 100 years that any opera company has attempted the feat.

For summer 2006, selected operas will be staged outdoors in the 40-acre grounds of the

hotel. Performances of the *Pirates of Penzance* will be staged on July 18 and 19 and *The Mikado* will be performed on July 20, 21 and 23.

The event has already attracted the attention of the Coach Tourism Council (CTC), which is planning an educational trip to the hotel on July 23 for coach and group travel organisers.

The Grim's Dyke Hotel, which is a Grade II listed building, is a firm favourite with coach

groups and offers competitive rates for parties of 20 or more. For the full calendar of Gilbert & Sullivan events and for further booking information, contact Paul Follows on 020 8385 3100 or go to www.grimsdyke.com.

■ The hotel is holding an open day on May 29 when guided tours of the house and grounds will be conducted. They will run from 11am to 5pm and admission will be £1 for adults and 50p for children aged 12 and above.



Fanfare: the Three Little Maids from *The Mikado* will be performing in the Grim's Dyke Hotel grounds

Drivers' passport to the Potteries

A world of privilege awaits coach drivers who take groups to Stoke-on-Trent now that tourism officials have announced details of their new Coach Driver's Passport.

The scheme is free to join and rewards drivers for bringing groups to the six towns that make up the Potteries – Tunstall, Burslem, Hanley (the city centre), Stoke, Fenton and Longton. Every time a driver brings a group to the city, he or she will receive one stamp for each participating factory shop or attraction that their group visits. The driver must have a minimum of 15 people in the group and stay at least 30 minutes in each shop.

The participating shops are Aynsley China, Churchill Factory Shop, Gladstone Pottery Museum, Moorcroft Heritage Visitor Centre and Factory Shop, Portmerion Factory Shops, Spode Visitor Centre and Factory Shop, Tutbury Crystal Glass and Wedgwood Factory Shop.

For every fifth visit, a driver can claim a £10 voucher to be redeemed at any of the above shops, except Gladstone Pottery Museum.

International Bus and Coach Trade Fair Feria de Madrid, Spain



Two factors make FIAA a unique event:

- Spain is the leading manufacturer and exporter of industrial vehicles and buses and coaches in Europe.
- Spain boasts a unique bodywork industry in terms of competitive edge, technology and design.

fiaa 2004

PARTICIPATING COMPANIES **261** International 51%
VISITORS **11,257** International 12%
NET EXHIBITION SURFACE (sq.m.) **22,126**

SECTORS Whole Vehicles, Chassis, Body Work, Auxiliary Industry, Services, Associations and Organizations, Technical Press



fiaa

2006

14/17 November

LINEA IFEMA

INTERNACIONAL (34) 91 722 30 00

FAX (34) 91 722 57 90

IFEMA
Feria de Madrid
28042 Madrid

fiaa@ifema.es

www.fiaa.ifema.es



IFEMA in U.K. and Ireland

Tel.: (44) 1442 23 00 33
Fax: (44) 1442 23 00 12
info@itsluk.com



Wheels come off for taxi company

Litany of maintenance issues and unfulfilled promises leads to immediate licence loss for Shildon-based taxi operator. Andy Jarosz reports.

County Durham Minicoach operator, Martindales Taxis and Minicoaches of Shildon, had its operators licence revoked with immediate effect (CBW April 26), after undertakings given at two earlier hearings this year had clearly not been adhered to. Martindales had faced a public inquiry in January, which was then adjourned to the following week, to allow the company to produce evidence to allow it to continue.

Deputy Traffic Commissioner Miss Elizabeth Perrett was told that a Mercedes StarRider coach belonging to the firm had been found abandoned, after at least one of its nearside rear wheels detached on the road. She said that having considered the evidence, she believed that the holder of the licence no longer satisfied the requirement to be of good repute. "I have no evidence before me to suggest that the promises given at the Public Inquiry on January 31 have been kept. Furthermore it appears that a vehicle has been used, which was not to be so used, until it had passed an MOT," she said.

Mrs Margaret Martindale, trading as Martindales Taxis and Minicoaches of George Street, Shildon, faced a public inquiry at Hillcrest House, Leeds, to consider regulatory action against its operating licence, in view of an unsatisfactory maintenance investigation, prohibition notices, and failure to comply with undertakings. Consideration of professional competence and good repute was also on the agenda.

Miss Perrett had presided over a public inquiry in January 2006, when VOSA vehicle examiner Gordon Whittaker had reported a maintenance investigation carried out on July 11 last year, where a vehicle had been examined and had a front tyre worn below the legal limit, a defective entrance door, and excessive wear in steering and braking components. He noted that inspection frequencies were erratic, and there was

little evidence to prove that any defects found during checks had been repaired. He said that maintenance records showed that vehicles consistently missed their stated four-weekly safety inspection, by at least one week, and one vehicle had gone 14 weeks without being looked at.

VOSA examiner Ray Jones told the inquiry that a minicoach which had been issued with a prohibition for having a seatbelt buckle cover missing, had been driven for 2,013 km between July 6 and July 22, while the prohibition was in force. It was then driven for a further 59km, before the prohibition was removed on July 25.

Miss Perrett adjourned the inquiry for a week to allow the operator to bring necessary paperwork to show that it was now implementing better procedures and systems. After reconvening the inquiry an immediate Section 16 condition was imposed, reducing the number of authorised vehicles from four to two until MOT certificates were produced for two vehicles.

The company, owned by Mrs Margaret Martindale, and managed by her son Mark, was not represented at the latest public inquiry, and the inquiry heard that Mrs Martindale had health problems, was hospitalised, and wished to surrender her licence. Miss Perrett said that she had not been asked for an adjournment, but as matters were very serious, she would not have agreed to an adjournment, nor would she accept the surrender of the licence, because Mrs Martindale's repute and

Key points

The Deputy Traffic Commissioner refused to accept the surrender of the licence because the operators repute was already so damaged. There was a worry that Mrs Martindale might be used as a 'front' if she was not disqualified.

The enquiry was adjourned by traffic commissioner David Dixon, who said many of the PG9s were not vandalism-related

I have very real concerns as to the safety of anyone using any of the vehicles

professional competence was already hanging by the finest of threads.

Vehicle Examiner Gordon Whittaker, based at the VOSA enforcement office in Darlington, presented a report describing an inspection of an abandoned vehicle belonging to Martindales on March 18. He said that he had been called by Durham Police, saying that the previous evening, Mercedes StarRider F43 CWY had lost a rear nearside wheel, and was still on the road, where the incident had occurred.

On reaching the scene, the minicoach was still abandoned, its nearside rear road wheels were located on their six wheel studs, but not fully in place, and no wheel nuts were fitted.

The wheels were held in place by a large stone wedged between the outer tyre and the kerb, and two wheel rims could be seen inside the vehicle in the

The wheels were held in place by a large stone wedged between the tyre and kerb

gangway. In addition the glass panel covering the fire extinguisher was broken and holed.

Mr Whittaker tried to contact the operator by phone, and visited its premises, but did not manage to speak to Mark Martindale, the operator's son who manages the firm, until March 28. Mr Martindale claimed that the vehicle was returning from Tyre Recovery at Tudhoe, when the detachment occurred.

Mr Stephen Raine at Tyre Recovery, produced an invoice dated March 13, showing that four recut tyres were fitted to the rear axle, and two part worn tyres were fitted to the front. He said that in his opinion the wheels were satisfactory, when they were fitted, but admitted that the wheel nuts were not tightened with a torque wrench, but with a pneumatic tool.

On March 29, Mark Martindale admitted to Mr Whittaker, who visited his premises that the tyres had been fitted four days before the detachment and not as he had claimed earlier. He said that the vehicle was brought back to the operating centre and parked up. He claimed that it had not been used again until March 17, when it was taken to a local filling station for fuel, and was on its way back when the wheels

detached. He said that the wheel nuts had not been re-checked since the vehicle returned from Tudhoe, as it had covered less than 50 kilometres, and that there were no further inspection records, subsequent to those produced at the re-convened Public Inquiry on January 31, as the vehicle had not been used. He also claimed that the glass panel over the fire extinguisher had been broken by vandals, while the vehicle was lying unattended at the roadside.

Mr Whittaker compared mileages on F43 CWY with that recorded on January 5 and concluded that the odometer had shown an increase of 2122 kilometres. "I conclude that although Tyre Recovery have failed to tighten the wheel nuts with a torque wrench, the operators have also failed to re-check wheel nut tightness during the four days between wheel fitment and detachment, and that this indicates a failure of the maintenance system," he said.

The Deputy Traffic Commissioner said that the operators licence had been curtailed by two vehicles in January, until two specific vehicles had been retested, and that neither of the two had yet been through their MOT, indeed, one of them was the one found by the roadside. "The assurances given to me regarding improvements have proved not to be the case. Mark Martindale has not been candid, and I have no evidence that the promises made on January 31 have been kept. The two specified vehicles had not been through their MOT, as required, and it may be that one of the vehicles was being used without an MOT," she added.

Miss Perrett said that she accepted that Mrs Martindale is an ill woman, but the proprietor had personally assured the Deputy Traffic Commissioner at the

Public Inquiry on January 31 that she would personally supervise the running of the fleet, and this she had failed to do so.

"I now accept that Mrs Martindale has no control of her son. He is a "wild card" with a cavalier attitude to road safety and only has a nodding acquaintance with the concept of honesty in his dealings with VOSA and the Office of the Traffic Commissioner," she said.

"I have very real concerns as to the safety of anyone using any of the vehicles being operated, or given the wheel loss, anyone in the vicinity. I want to have these vehicles off the road as quickly as possible." She therefore revoked the operator's licence from 23.59 on Saturday April 22, 2006.

Miss Perrett accepted that Mrs Martindale is in poor health, and she did not think that it was likely Mrs Martindale would wish to run a business again. Nevertheless, Miss Perrett disqualified Mrs Martindale from holding an Operator's Licence for a period of 5 years, not because she believed Mrs. Martindale might try to, but because she had concerns that some unscrupulous person might seek to use her as a "front".

The Deputy Traffic Commissioner also made it plain that any future application, which involved Mark Martindale, should be considered at Public Inquiry first.

He only has a nodding acquaintance with the concept of honesty

Upcoming PIs

WALES

Flint, May 2, 2006, 10.30 hrs

Pats Coaches Ltd
Disciplinary

- To consider a report received from the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency regarding the operator's maintenance standards and arrangements. Also to consider the apparent lack of adherence to the general undertakings attached to all licences.

Flint, May 11, 2006, 11.00 hrs

Eric W Jones & Jean Ann Jones, t/a Express Motors

Disciplinary
- To consider a report from the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency of the operator's apparent failure to operate local bus services in accordance with their registered particulars.

WESTERN

Bristol, May 8, 2006, 14.00 hrs

Raymond Robert Dunn & Sally Linda Dunn, t/a Ray Dunn Mini-coach Travel

Disciplinary
- To consider a report from the Vehicle and

Operator Services Agency regarding maintenance standards and arrangements.

NORTH EASTERN

Leeds, May 3, 2006, 10.30 hrs

Saltire Coaches Ltd
- To consider the merits of an application for a standard international public service vehicle operator's licence to authorise the use of five vehicles.

Leeds, May 5, 2006, 10.30 hrs

Brian Lockwood & Paul Lockwood, t/a B L Travel

Disciplinary
- To consider a report received from the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency regarding the operator's maintenance standards and arrangements.

Leeds, May 12, 2006, 10.30 hrs

Skills Motor Coaches Ltd. Disciplinary
- To consider a report received from the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency regarding the operator's maintenance standards and arrangements.

"ws_ h0q2n8T"

We know Transport Law backwards

Contact **backhousejones**
solicitors
specialists in transport law

on 01254 828300 or www.backhouses.co.uk

Open platform

by 'Grass Routes Coaches'

Uncle TOMS cobblers, an' all...

The Tour Operator's Margin Scheme is so complex that it is not only hard to administer but isn't even rational, says our mystery operator



In my experience there are two ways to cook a chicken: the first involves a chef, who weighs the bird, works out the cooking time and puts it in the oven. Everyone eats a hearty meal

The second has competing teams, supervised by outside management consultants and highly-paid senior managers. While meetings are held and reports are written, the chicken goes bad and another has to be purchased.

Eventually several chickens are produced, most undercooked or burnt to a crisp. And the payoff? There isn't enough chicken to go around.

Why is it that so much of what I need to do these days is so complicated that there is no chance of getting it right?

I don't like paying tax - I don't suppose anyone does. But, I do understand and respect the need for taxes. So I accept that I must pay tax, and that the amount to be paid must be carefully calculated. What I cannot accept is that I should waste hour after hour trying to calculate something that is guaranteed to be wrong when I finish it.

The thing that is particularly bugging me at the moment is TOMS - the Tour Operator's Margin Scheme.

Before you get excited let me make it perfectly clear that if you read to the end of this article, study the content carefully and really work hard you will be no wiser than you are right now.

There are two mutually exclusive truths about TOMS:

1. No one understands it

2. Everyone understand it but, no two people have the same understanding

In a nutshell - and it is a brazil nut that just will not crack, but if you do get inside, it's like a walnut so the bits are all trapped and smashed up around the edges so you cannot get them out. If you run an inclusive tour you have to pay tax on the profit element of that part of the tour which is not pure travel; the 'Margin'.

Easy, you offer a tour - coach travel and theatre tickets. For each passenger you charge £10 for the coach and £20.00 for the theatre. If you only paid £17 for the tickets then the profit is £3 per person and you pay tax on that element. Simple - but that is not quite how it works.

You ran a series of advertisements, so include the cost, but the adverts were multipurpose and also offered private hire services. How do you divide that cost - maybe work out the area covered by each component and apportion the costs in that way - but do both parts share the phone number 50/50 or does the excursion require more telephone calls and therefore a larger share of the number's space? On a bad day you can be sure that whichever way you choose the Revenue will demand a different route.

You might want to include the cost of the staff time to order the tickets, the postage to send the tickets out, you may even have borrowed the money to buy the tickets in advance and therefore have to consider the interest on that



Grass Routes is a coach operator who has asked us to keep their identity a secret

If you want to let off some steam, just tap away at the keyboard and send your rant (or carefully-reasoned views) to cbwinbox@rouncymedia.co.uk, or fax 0845 280 2927. Make 'Open Platform' the subject line. Alternatively, send your missive to Coach and Bus Week, 3 The Office Village, Cygnet Park, Peterborough PE7 8FD

loan. £10 per head. is that an inflated charge for the coach? Would you normally get, say, £500 for such a trip? If you only carried 20 passengers was £200 a reasonable price or shouldn't you really say that the coach earned £500 because it was your mismanagement that you did not sell the extra seats. HM Customs and Revenue can insist that you calculate what percentage of all of your mileage and expenditure was used on this type of visit. Or they may use some other measure.

I wonder at what rate I can charge into the calculation all the hours I am spending, or far worse all the money I am spending, on an accountant to try to work it all out. Does a bottle of single malt to help clarify my thoughts count as a cost on the travel or the margin component?

The madness is that it seems no two revenue inspectors understand the ruling in the same way, so what may work for one company will not work for the next.

I think I have found a great solution. If you do not make a profit on these visits then there is no margin on which to calculate the tax. So that's it; make a thundering loss, the customer will be happy they got a good price and the Revenue is off your back.



IN NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE...

Out+About

Your monthly guide to what's on, what's new, what's hot, and what's an absolute bargain in coach tourism.

PLUS Why an operator has just replaced its entire fleet with a single model of coach



Send your letters to cbwinbox@rouncymedia.co.uk, fax 0845 2802927 or write to:
Inbox, CBW, 3 The Office Village, Cygnet Park, Hampton, Peterborough PE7 8FD

Staff pulled out the stops

You ran an article on the recent demise of Amberlee, stating that Arriva had taken over their routes.

Out of the 14 that Amberlee had, Chalkwell Coach Hire has picked up five of them, including services to the Medway Universities.

We got the call about 4pm last Wednesday, and by Thursday morning we were covering the work. I was actually on holiday, so I am very proud of the way our staff got everything together at such short notice. Three of the Amberlee drivers came to work for us to drive on the Medway routes.

We have purchased another Wright bodied Dart from Wealden PSV and two ex-Arriva 31 seat Mercedes to cover the work.

Roland Eglinton,

operations manager,

Chalkwell Coach Hire & Tours, Sittingbourne

Buyer beware

My company's involvement with ticketing since 1976 has overseen many changes and means we can offer sound advice to operators considering a new ticket system.

It's not a decision to be rushed, and should be well thought out. Failure to ask searching questions before ordering can land you in deep water, regardless of whether the equipment is subsidised. Those swayed by the apparent technology of a system should first conduct a reality check.

There's no point in a machine being able to do all but go to the moon, if it crashes and your driver has to tell passengers: 'My machine is just re-booting. It'll only be two minutes.' Questions to ask before buying should include: 'With radio LAN machines, what happens to data back-up in the case of data transmission failure?'; 'Which operator with operational experience of the machine would recommend it to me?'; 'What sort of reputation does the manufacturer have for delivery and service?'

Operators should consider the demanding level of IT and software-related technical back-up that new-generation ticket machines require. It's about more than circuit boards and repairs these days, I'm afraid.

John Groves,

Saltcoats, Ayrshire

LETTER OF THE WEEK

Arriva's decision to sack 27 drivers over the age of 65 will do nothing to help convince people that working later is a possibility.

What prospects do they have of gaining further employment, given that I am 55 and hold both PCV and LGV licences and cannot even get an interview let alone a job?

Ageism exists and will continue even after October when new legislation comes into force. Employers do not have to give reasons as to why they do not employ you; in many instances they do not even bother to acknowledge your application, and therefore those of mature years will have absolutely no better prospects than they have now.

Nick Dasey, Watton, Norfolk



WIN A BUS! Sort of... Drop us a line and if your letter is chosen as our Letter of the Week, you'll receive a top-notch coach or bus model courtesy of our friends at Corgi. Please try to keep your letters under 200 words. The editor's decision is final.

Volvo ESP problem

There have been some recent reports concerning the performance of the ESP (Electronic Stability Programme) on some Volvo B12M and B12B coaches.

The Programme monitors vehicle accelerations, etc, to help ensure that vehicle cornering remains stable. If the system parameters are exceeded, the vehicle throttle setting is reduced or individual wheel brakes are applied, and a warning light signals system activation to the driver. Under normal driving conditions, the system will not need to operate.

The recent reports from customers have been carefully investigated by Volvo staff from the UK and from Sweden. Our conclusion is that the ESP system has been operating according to specification.

When a vehicle is lightly laden, investigations showed that the ESP can cut in rather abruptly. Therefore,

CBW is the only paid-for weekly news magazine for the coach and bus industry. Each week the magazine provides a unique insight. Your views are always welcome. Write to the editor at the above address.

to improve passenger comfort while not compromising vehicle safety, we have prepared an update for the ESP software that will be made available on the affected existing vehicles, while all new vehicles will be updated - before delivery where possible.

The ESP feature was introduced in 2004/5 and approximately 300 B12M and B12B with ESP are already in operation across the UK and the Irish Republic. We will be contacting the operators in the next few days.

Adrian Wickens, Volvo Bus, Warwick

The right result

Following a meeting, I am delighted to be able to advise that the IW Council have listened and reacted.

Whilst I have not yet received the 'official' notification I am told that the following will be implemented: seven-day ticket covering all day and overnight parking for £60; alternative a £10 overnight rate and a £3 charge for each car park used during the day. To get a council to react at all shows how strong the feeling was both on and off the island - and I am sure due in no small part to the campaign followed by the CTC and CBW.

Ian Winn, sales director, Isle of Wight Ferries

5 YEARS AGO Less than six months after unveiling its mid-engined B12M stainless steel chassis as the replacement for the long-running B10M, Volvo launches the rear-engined B12B

10 YEARS AGO Travellers Coach Company is listed as the fifth most profitable coach company in the UK in Coach News's Business Ratio Plus report

20 YEARS AGO Advance order worth around £8 million exceeded Optare's expectations for its new low-floor bus. The Excel entered the market at a competitive price of £78,000. First deliveries were to Blackpool Transport

May 3 in history:

1841 New Zealand was declared a British colony

1920 Future boxing middleweight champion of the world Sugar Ray Robinson born. Christened Walter Smith and not Sugar Ray... oddly

1937 Margaret Mitchell's novel *Gone with the Wind* wins the Pulitzer Prize

Boy wonder

Golden Boy Coaches has one of the most distinctive names in the business, one of the cleverest buying policies, and a proactive attitude to dealing with the challenges the coaching industry seems to throw up regularly these days. *CBW* meets the brains behind the business, and gets a close look at its stunning fleet.

The last time *CBW* came across Golden Boy was last summer when the company took delivery of its latest Volvo Van Hool, a high-spec Alizee T9 Alicron. Two things stood out: the company's unusual name, and the fact that its full-size coach fleet was standardised around this chassis/body combination.

So when we got an invitation from Alec Horner, the boss of Driver Training and Health & Safety consultants 'Minimise Your Risk', to attend one of his driver training days at Golden Boy's depot, we accepted immediately.

History

Why the company is called Golden Boy is a bit of a mystery, even to the owners, because the company was actually started by Terry McIntyre

Senior's brother in 1968. According to the most likely explanation, he took the name after taking a group of customers up to the London Palladium in that year to see Sammy Davis Junior star in the musical play *Golden Boy*.

Terry McIntyre Senior took over the business in 1972 and was joined in 1983 by two of his children, Geraldine and Terry. Both joined the Civil Service after leaving school but went into the family firm shortly afterwards, and worked alongside their father for 22 years.

Mr McIntyre Senior retired two years ago, although he is still involved in the business and is regularly to be found on the company premises. Geraldine and Terry are now joint managing directors: Terry looks after the vehicles and the operations, while Geraldine runs the sales side.

Headquarters

Golden Boy moved into its present, purpose-built premises in Hoddeston, Hertfordshire, four and a half years ago, just a mile away from where it was first established in 1968. Hoddeston is on the A10, on the Hertfordshire/Essex border, and very convenient for the M25, London and its airports. The depot is just off the A1170 main road in the town, on a small industrial estate.

The building is split between the workshop - staffed 24 hours a day - and offices, including a seminar room/staff room that can seat 20 people.

It was the sheer complexity of overseeing the building of the new premises and, particularly, installing an underground fuel tank, that, says Terry, opened the company's eyes to the mass of regulations governing Health & Safety.



"When we came here, we reviewed a lot of things on the Health & Safety side," he says, "and it really opened our eyes. And an awful lot has changed in the four and a half years since then."

Training

Golden Boy first started Health & Safety training courses with Hertfordshire County Council having recognised that greater and greater demands were being placed on their employees. Golden Boy employs 45 drivers, 10 of them part-time.

Geraldine says: "We found everybody really receptive to being trained, the feedback we got was very good. We all do things all right but customers expect more these days, they expect a much more professional business. Everybody has to change to fit that. Training is expensive, but it should pay for itself."

Having said that, both Terry and Geraldine are conscious of jumping on the latest bandwagon, citing the driver NVQs of a few years ago that never went anywhere.

Terry came across Minimise Your Risk when he attended the CPT Coaching Conference at Volvo Warwick last October. As a teetotaler he approached Alex for advice on a Drink and Drugs policy but, as he says: "I realised very quickly there was an awful lot more to this than just a policy

on drink." Alec came down to the depot, reviewed a lot of the company's policies and helped to re-write some of them. "I realised I needed somebody to relay all of this information to our staff," Terry adds. "I can say it a hundred times, but when you get somebody like him saying it they take a little bit more notice."

The work

Unusually, Golden Boy does not do excursions. Geraldine McIntyre says: "We used to do them, but it is an awful lot of hard work for what you get back." Instead, the company prefers to let local travel firms worry about filling seats, and hires them the coach instead.

Consequently, the mainstays of the business are contracts, coach hire, service buses and, of course, school work. The company counts Marks & Spencer and Tesco among its clients, as well as Hertfordshire and Essex County Councils and three major independent schools, one of which requires 14 coaches a day.

The fleet

Golden Boy has 33 vehicles on its fleet in total, 17 full size coaches, 14 minibuses/minicoaches and, currently, two Alexander Dennis service buses. The age profile currently stands at 6.25 years, almost on the target of between

5.5-6 years. All the company's vehicles have personalised number plates, the vast majority of them with BOY, including the Ford Focus fleet car, and the director's cars.

All the full size vehicles are Volvo Van Hool Alizees because, says Terry: "We think it's the best, and the most reliable. One battle we have had though is fuel." Despite specifying the latest, brand new, T9 Alicron with I-Shift, the company is still not getting the mpg figures it hears other operators are getting. Volvo engineers have been all over it but Terry is still not impressed with the fuel economy.

The Alicron is pretty much identical to its predecessor on the fleet, an Alizee II T9 bought in 2003, because Golden Boy's customers really took to it. "In the couple of years since we have had it it has caught people's imagination >

Timeless elegance: Seventeen years separate the oldest and newest vehicles on Golden Boy's Volvo Van Hool fleet, but you would hardly know it

Pictures: Keith Simpson

COMPANY HISTORY

1968 Golden Boy founded
1972 Golden Boy taken over by Terry McIntyre Snr
1983 Brother and sister Terry McIntyre Jnr and Geraldine McIntyre join the business
1986 Starts local bus services after de-regulation
1991 Buying policy starts after company buys first Volvo Van Hool

1992 Sells bus business to the Linton Group, forerunner of Arriva
1998 Livery colourways reversed, vehicles now given boy's names
2000 Gets back into the bus business
2004 Terry McIntyre Snr retires
2006 Starts driver training





and they ring up and ask for it," says Terry.

Both coaches are highly specified, with two-tone leather, aircraft-style doors to the hat-racks, polished alloy wheels, colour monitors and DVD player.

Fourteen of the full-size coaches have air con, a prerequisite since 1998, 11 have a toilet, and three are fitted with tables.

Despite the fact that all the mid-size vehicles are Mercedes-Benz, the company still has quite a variety of vehicles, from Plaxton Beavers and Cheetahs, to Sitar Belugas, and a Euro Coachbuilders LX 33. What the company loses out on mpg with the larger vehicles, it makes up on the smaller ones, regularly getting 15mpg from the Varios.

The firm currently has two service buses, a 29-seat automatic Dennis Mini Dart with Alexander Dennis body, and a 39-seat automatic Dennis Dart with Plaxton Pointer body. The latter is hired from Dawson Rentals and will be replaced with a new Dennis Dart Alexander 39-seater in June 2006.

Golden Boy were the first local operator to start operating bus services

after de-regulation which it did until 1992, mainly on tendered routes. Then the company sold the business to the Linton group, the forerunner of Arriva.

Six years ago, Arriva had a problem recruiting drivers and de-registered a route. Golden Boy stepped in, operated the route for three months until the end of the tender, won it back and has been operating it ever since.

In total, the company now has four bus routes, using a midicoach and two buses. After the tenders came up again in January this year, the company won three more, although Terry says he does not want the bus business to get any bigger than that.

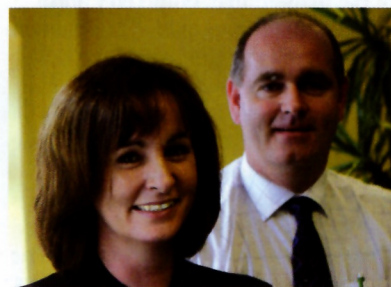
Livery

The livery was originally gold, with black and red stripes. This changed in 1998 when the colours were reversed, with black becoming the base colour, with red and gold flashes on top, although there are exceptions to this. On some of the minicoaches the base colour is gold - and even red in one case, although the design is identical with just the colours switched.

The Golden Boy logo was actually drawn by a Van Hool designer when Terry Junior and Geraldine went over to the factory to spec R3 BOY, the first black Golden Boy coach, and the last new B10M manual.

Since 1968 the vehicles had been named after female family members which, says Geraldine, had always niggled her as the company was Golden Boy. Since R3 BOY - Master John - the vehicles have all been

Above: the directors cars. Terry McIntyre senior has S1 BOY. Right: Geraldine and Terry McIntyre, joint managing directors.



Above: transport manager Geoff Jaikens. Right: driver John Milner. Below right: Terry McIntyre senior.



We always seem to ride it out and move on to face the next thing that comes along

Geraldine McIntyre



named after male family members.

Buying policy

The buying policy can be summed up in one word: standardisation. All the full-size vehicles are Volvo Van Hools, and all the smaller ones are Mercedes, or Mercedes-based.

The big coaches are mostly bought late second hand from reputable operators but the most recent additions have both been bought brand new.

"The fleet policy started in 1991 when I went to look at Tigers at Plaxton's in Anston," says Terry. "They had an ex-Shearings Volvo Van Hool in stock and offered us a good deal. As soon as we had it we started this buying policy because we were so happy with it."

Golden Boy had up until then generally bought Plaxton Supremes on Leyland chassis, but started to buy ex-Shearings' Volvo Van Hools, buying five in 1996 alone, and still have a couple of them left now because they are so reliable. Having bought ex-Shearings vehicles initially, the company now buys its vehicles off Kenzies, just up the road in Royston. It did buy vehicles aged 7-8 years, but reduced this to 4-5 years in 2002.

"We do pay a premium for Cyril's vehicles but it is worth it because they have been so well maintained," says Terry. As for new vehicles, Terry says: "There is no exact policy but we aim to buy a new coach every two years."

All the smaller vehicles have been bought new since 1998, with the company buying one or two new vehicles every year, apart from this year. "We've been stopped buying a new one this year because of digitachs," says Terry. "The bigger

vehicles tend to have dedicated drivers, but the smaller ones are driven by everybody, so fitting a digitach would be awkward."

The future

The most immediate threat for coach companies based near London is the upcoming Low Emission Zone.

Despite having a fleet age well below the government's target of eight years, as it stands, not a single one of the company's vehicles could enter the zone without incurring a fine of several hundred pounds.

The company will wait until the terms of the LEZ are finalised before acting, but Terry is naturally concerned over a rumoured cost of £15,000 to make the vehicles compliant. But, as Geraldine says: "We always seem to ride it out and move on to face the next thing that comes along." >



Above: the in-house workshop, manned 24 hours a day. Left: Carol Ford and Leigh Player in the sales office. Below left: driver Ian Jacobs. Below: workshop manager Paul Murdoch.



When we came here, we reviewed a lot of things on the Health & Safety side and it really opened our eyes. And an awful lot has changed in the four and a half years since then

Terry McIntyre



Left and above: Golden Boys latest and most luxurious Van Hool



From the CBW archive: the original Golden Boy livery

FLEET LIST

Body Type	Chassis Type	Seats	Previous Operator	First Reg'd
Van Hool Alizee T9 Alicron	Volvo B12B I Shift	41/49/53	New	06/05
Van Hool Alizee II T9	Volvo B12B Auto	41/49/53	New	03/03
Van Hool Alizee II T9	Volvo B12B Auto	49/53/57	Kenzies	06/02
Van Hool Alizee II T9	Volvo B10MT Easy Shift	49/53	Kenzies	05/00
Van Hool Alizee II T9	Volvo B10MT Easy Shift	49/53	Kenzies	05/00
Van Hool Alizee II T9	Volvo B10MT Easy Shift	49/53	Kenzies	05/99
Van Hool Alizee II T9	Volvo B10MT Easy Shift	49/53	Kenzies	04/99
Van Hool Alizee II T9	Volvo B10MT Easy Shift	49/53	Kenzies	04/99
Van Hool Alizee II T9	Volvo B10MT Manual	39/49/53	New	04/98
Van Hool Alizee T8	Volvo B10MT Manual	49/53	Parks of Hamilton	03/98
Van Hool Alizee T8	Volvo B10MT Manual	49/53	Parks of Hamilton	03/98
Van Hool Alizee T8	Volvo B10MT Manual	53	Kenzies	05/96
Van Hool Alizee T8	Volvo B10MT Manual	53	Kenzies	04/96
Van Hool Alizee T8	Volvo B10MT Manual	53	Kenzies	05/95
Van Hool Alizee T8	Volvo B10MT Manual	57	Shearings	01/91
Van Hool Alizee T8	Volvo B10MT Manual	57	Longstaffs	04/89
Van Hool Alizee T8	Volvo B10MT Manual	57	Shearings	01/89
Plaxton Cheetah	Mercedes Vario Manual	33	New	10/05
Euro LX 33	Mercedes Vario Manual	33	New	10/04
Sitcar Beluga	Mercedes 0815 DT Manual	29	New	04/04
Sitcar Beluga	Mercedes 0815 DT Manual	29	New	02/03
Plaxton Cheetah	Mercedes Vario Manual	33	New	06/02
Plaxton Cheetah	Mercedes Vario Manual	33	New	09/01
Plaxton Cheetah	Mercedes Vario Manual	33	New	09/99
Plaxton Cheetah	Mercedes Vario Manual	29	New	09/99
Crest Conversions	Mercedes Sprinter 413 CDi	16	New	01/03
Crest Conversions	Mercedes Sprinter 413 CDi	16	New	09/01
Plaxton Beaver Plus2	Mercedes 0814D Manual	29	New	03/06
Plaxton Beaver Plus2	Mercedes 0814D Auto	33	New	01/04
Plaxton Beaver Plus2	Mercedes 0814D Auto	33	New	01/04
Reeves Burgess Beaver	Mercedes 0811D Manual	25	Jones Travel	05/90
Alexander Dennis	Dennis Mini Dart Auto	29	New	03/06
Plaxton Pointer	Dennis Dart Auto	39	Hire Vehicle	05/02
Mercedes Vito Maintenance Vehicle	Mercedes Vito 110 CDi	3	New	06/02
Ford Focus Fleet Car	Ford Focus LXTD	4	New	07/02

Minimise your risk

Formal driver training should now be on the agenda for coach and bus companies in a big way. The new Training Directive means that from 2008, in order to get a PCV license, and from 2013 to renew one, you will need a Drivers Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC). Qualifying for this means completing at least 35 hours of an accredited driver training programme.

Minimise Your Risk, run by owner/operator Alec Horner, is already accredited by GoSkills - the sector skills council for the coach and bus industry, and the organization charged with implementing the Driving Hours Directive. This means that eventually Alec will be able to sign off training records for drivers wanting to renew their licences.

Alec's 'Driver Briefing' course is therefore in line with what the Driver

Alec Horner, boss of Minimise Your Risk, leads a discussion on Drugs and Alcohol during a Driver Briefing session at Golden Boy Coaches



Training Directive will require. The only difference between what will happen from 2008 is the lack of electronic recording of training logs. GoSkills is currently designing a system to come on-stream when the system goes live.

The UK has however won an important concession over the rest of Europe. The Directive says that drivers must have completed 35 hours training before they can renew their licences. In the UK, that training can be done over a five-year period, in seven-hour chunks. A further concession, to be able to split the seven hours down to fit training around school runs, etc, is under consideration at the moment.

As it stands though drivers should do seven hours, or one day's training, per year. With a wide syllabus that includes sections on driving, regulations and health & safety, and theory and practical sessions, that means a packed schedule.

"There is a fair bit of paperwork today," says Alec as he kicks off with a 35 multiple choice test on the Highway Code. This is followed by tests on Road



The training includes a practical lifting and handling session

The training gives drivers a wider perspective on the industry, giving background information that drivers rarely otherwise get the chance to hear

Alec Horner started Minimise Your Risk in 2003, and is currently one of the few companies to offer driver training courses in the industry.

He says his background gives him a definite advantage when working with coach and bus operators: "The driving side is important," he says. "They have got to be able to relate to you."

He learned to drive himself as one of the last company trainees at Thomas Tilling in the late 1960s. Since then he has driven, he says, a variety of vehicles, from "bendies, big, little, school, boozy buses and private hires."

Latterly Alec worked at Airlinks where he developed an early form of his Driver's Briefing course.

Minimise Your Risk specialises in small and medium sized operators. The costs of holding driver briefings vary depending on the size of the company, but will work out at around £35-40 per driver per year.

Contact Alec Horner on 01273 580189.

Risk, Drugs & Alcohol, Health & Safety and Insurance throughout the day, and a practical session loading cases into the back of a coach.

The training gives drivers a wider perspective on the industry, giving background information that drivers rarely otherwise get the chance to hear. For instance, on Health & Safety, Alec says that in 2005 there were 220 deaths at work that came under the Health & Safety regulations. This actually makes the UK one of the safest working environments in the world, but in 2004 there were also 3,301 deaths on the road.

Records were not kept for the number of those people who were working at the time, but the generally accepted proportion is around a third, i.e 1,100 people. This means that five times as many people are killed outside of the 'home' working environment as in it.

Alec hardly has to point out that you can make the 'home' environment as safe as you like, but the real danger to your employees, and your business, is out on the road, and nowhere is this more likely to be felt than a business that employs and relies on professional drivers.

Likewise, hearing that the cause of 75% of accidents are down to the drivers in some way, that most operators are effectively self-insured because of huge excesses on insurance policies, or that sleepy drivers kill more people on the roads than drunk ones do certainly brings the subjects into sharp focus.

The section on drugs and alcohol is similarly very useful as it updates people's knowledge on exactly what, these days, a unit of alcohol actually is. Without wanting to reveal too many of Alec's secrets, suffice to say that a unit these days is very different than what it was when the system was first introduced in the 1980s. Did you know that you could be over the limit after one can of regular lager?

The Training Directive specifies a core syllabus but operators can extra extra elements themselves. Strangely the syllabus does not include anything on the Highway Code, as not every country has something comparable. It does however include a section on the Asylum and Immigration Act. Some service bus drivers might question why they need to learn about this, but Alec emphasises that the training is for the class of licence and not for the actual work being carried out. ●



Driven to distraction

In Part Two of his advice on avoiding the traffic commissioner, Miles Dorrington explains the pitfalls which could land a driver in the 'dock' by answering questions he has been asked

Q I have been driving coaches for several years and normally drive each day, Monday morning to Saturday lunchtime. I often end up finishing the week away from home and returning in a relief car that my employer provides. They insist that I first drive the relief car back to the depot before travelling home. Is this ok?

Mr O, Truro

A You are right to be concerned because being asked to drive back to the depot in the relief car is likely to be interfering with your weekly rest if you are being required to drive back to the depot before proceeding home.

This is because in order for a period of time to be considered as "rest" you must be free to dispose of that period of time yourself. If you are not able to freely dispose of your time when you take over the relief car then the journey back to base will be classed as "other work". Not only could you be committing a weekly rest offence but if this period of other work is not recorded on the tachograph chart then a further offence would also be committed.

Your employer could also be prosecuted for the same offences. It is therefore in both of your best interests to avoid this from happening.

If you are able to take over the relief car and are not told where you must go with it then you will be free to dispose of your time and the time spent driving to where you want can still be classed as rest. In that way no record needs to be made on the tachograph chart other, perhaps, than to indicate when your period of weekly rest started.

Q I drive buses for school runs Monday to Friday and then drive a coach all day each Saturday. I do this every week and always hand my tachograph chart in for the coach work but recently someone told me I was in breach of the driver's hours and tachograph rules. How can that be, especially when I always have Sunday off?

Mrs J, Bristol



Miles Dorrington is an Associate and dual-qualified barrister in the Transport Team at Bond Pearce Solicitors specialising in all aspects of passenger transport work. He regularly appears at Public Inquiries and before the Courts for operators and drivers and can be contacted on 0870 120 0000 or by email at miles.dorrington@bondpearce.com

A The person who told you is quite right and it is surprising that your Transport Manager has not picked this up.

The problem is that the one day of coach work brings the whole week within the EU driving rules for weekly rest purposes as you are undertaking "mixed driving". Under the mixed driving rules the days you drive a bus will be classed as "other work" and therefore you will either be doing that or "driving" for the day you undertake coach work.

Unfortunately this means that you will probably not be getting at least 45 consecutive hours for the purposes of weekly rest when it is due and by the sound of it you will not be recording your time in a bus as "other work" for those days. To avoid any risk of prosecution you should raise this immediately with your Transport Manager and insist on sufficient weekly rest and provision to manually record the days classed as "other work".

Q I drive EU-regulated vehicles and always fit my tachograph immediately before I leave the depot each morning. Recently an officer from VOSA interviewed me under caution and I am now facing prosecution for failing to keep proper tachograph records because I have not been recording the time spent undertaking my walk round inspection

To avoid any risk of prosecution you should raise this immediately with your Transport Manager and insist on sufficient weekly rest and provision to manually record the days classed as "other work".

of the vehicle on the tachograph chart for each day. Is this right?

Mrs T, Cardiff

A This is a very common situation. The problem is that you are required to record all of your duty time on your tachograph chart.

Undertaking a walk round inspection is classed as duty and in your case because you only fit the tachograph chart after you have undertaken the inspection of the vehicle this duty time has not been recorded. The tachograph record is therefore not a proper record because it does not record all of the duty time for each day.

You should either make a manual entry at the end of each day to show the start and finish time of your duty if that differs from the trace on the tachograph chart or you should fit your chart before undertaking the walk round inspection being sure to change the mode switch to show "other work" while you do it.

Q I work from the Midlands and often have to drive coaches to Lands End in Cornwall for day trips in the summer. When the roads are relatively clear the return trip can normally be done in under nine hours driving but when the roads are busy it can take up to 11 hours and often I find it hard to stop to take a break if I am stuck in a traffic jam. I always write on the back of the tachograph chart that heavy traffic has made it impossible for me to stay within the rules but after an inspection of my tachograph records by VOSA I am now being prosecuted. Surely they have made a mistake?

Mr W, Birmingham

A It is the duty of every operator to plan routes, with a sufficient time margin factored in, to allow a driver to complete the journey within their maximum permitted driving limits. As you acknowledge that during the busy summer months road conditions can interfere with the journey time you can not expect to rely on those road conditions as an exceptional circumstance.



Only in truly unforeseen circumstances can you deviate from the rules; for example an accident occurring that caused a bottleneck of traffic and then only if the accident occurred after you had started the journey and you were therefore unable to avoid being caught in the congestion. The same applies to the duty to take a 45-minute break every 4 ½ hours cumulative driving and you should therefore consider double manning the coach in the busy summer period to avoid this problem happening.

Q I have pleaded guilty to a number of offences in the Magistrates Court and the Traffic Commissioner has now called me in to see if I should be disqualified

from holding PCV driving entitlement or whether it should be suspended or revoked. Having pleaded guilty I thought I couldn't be punished twice for the same offences?

Mrs J, London

A In the Courts such a rule does apply, it is called double jeopardy, but the Traffic Commissioner has a duty to see if you are still fit to hold PCV driving entitlement and the sanctions the Traffic Commissioner can impose are a means of ensuring this takes place. Since the Traffic Commissioner's overriding duty is to ensure road safety, rather than to punish an individual, there is no issue of double jeopardy.

Drivers must have a solid knowledge of regulations to avoid the risk of losing their licences

...for more than one conviction the Traffic Commissioners normally apply a sliding scale of sanction...

Q I am due before the Traffic Commissioner next week as a result of several convictions for driver's hours offences. I know that the Traffic Commissioner can take action against me but what am I likely to receive?

Mr A, Newcastle Upon Tyne

A That depends entirely on the type of offence that has occurred and the number of offences.

As a general rule of thumb, a single conviction for a breach of the driver's hours or tachograph rules (other than for a falsification) will normally result in a formal warning if there has been no history of offending previously.

For more than one conviction the Traffic Commissioners normally apply a sliding scale of sanction, starting with a short period of suspension of PCV entitlement. Useful guidance can be found in the Practice Directions at www.vosa.gov.uk following the links from "HGV and PSV Operators" to "HGV/PSV Regulations" to "Practice Direction: Drivers Conduct".

Q I recently appeared before the Traffic Commissioner and he suspended my PCV entitlement for three months but having now read the Practice Directions on the VOSA website this seems too harsh. What can I do?

Mr M, London

A You have the right to appeal to the Magistrates Court against the sanction imposed by the Traffic Commissioner. This should be done to your local Magistrates Court by writing to the Clerk to the Justices in a letter that makes it clear that you wish to appeal the Traffic Commissioner's decision under section 119 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 and your reasons for making the appeal. You should enclose a copy of the letter from the Traffic Commissioner and you should, at the same time, notify the Traffic Commissioner of your intention to appeal their decision.

The Liberal way

As part of our series of high profile political interviews, *CBW* meets Alistair Carmichael, the newly appointed Liberal Democrat secretary of state for Transport. He is new to the industry, but says his background gives him and his party the edge. Andy Peace reports

CBW: You were only very recently appointed to the position of Liberal Democrat shadow transport minister, so it is pretty early on in policy formation stage, but what are your initial thoughts?

AC: We have – if not exactly a blank sheet of paper – then we have a sheet of paper with a number of gaps which can be filled in. I start from the position that there are three legs to transport policy: It is an instrument for economic development, for environmental improvement and thirdly transport is an instrument of social inclusion. I think if you increase people's physical mobility then you increase their earning and educational opportunities, and their social mobility as a result of that. You then take that into each of the areas, aviation, coaches and buses, trains, ferries, whatever it is, and apply these three tests to each area. And of course, thereafter you pursue that nirvana of the integrated transport system so that each of these areas of your policy is seen to work in harmony with each other, rather than as the case is at the moment to contradict each other.

CBW: So will you be looking at restricting car use?

AC: Yes. I think in urban areas in particular where you have a good infrastructure in place in terms of public transport, then it is the business of government to encourage people to use that rather than use the private car. There are areas of the country where you don't have the infrastructure, where the private car is still going to have a much more dominant role in the future. Whatever system you have has to have the flexibility to cater for both these needs. That's where the attraction of road user pricing comes in, that gives you the flexibility to start from providing different needs with different solutions.

CBW: So that's the stick?

AC: You call it a stick, but I always see it is a carrot actually, coming from an

area that would be road user pricing gainers. I think it's actually about marrying transport choices to the impact that these choices have. As a Liberal I could say you make your own choices as an individual, but if there is a price – social, environmental or economic – attached to the choice you make then you pay it.

CBW: It seems to me that your policy is quite closely aligned with Labour policy – you talk about social inclusion and road user charging as two of your main policies. Is that correct?

AC: I suppose we come at it from a similar background and we would approach it with the same priorities, what I would say about Labour is that they have had nine years to actually

make a difference and they haven't done, and that is a real failure. When I spoke in the budget debate recently, on transport, one of the things I said was that I don't understand why the Labour Party in government hasn't done more with transport, because transport can do so much for a Labour government. We get a series of speeches which effectively amount to statements of pious intent. [Alistair] Darling's speech on the railways was a classic example of that.

CBW: Double decker trains?

AC: Yes, double decker trains. It's great copy for a day, but everybody knows that double decker trains are not going to happen without a massive amount of investment. In many ways the role of the DfT at the moment seems to be to neutralise transport as a debate, and to take the heat out of the issue. I often think that transport ministers in this government are like black holes, they absorb light, whereas what they could be doing is driving a lot of the change that is needed to achieve the rhetoric.

CBW: There does seem to be quite a lot going on...

AC: Give credit where credit is due. The money they have put into the improvements on the West Coast mainline was the sort of investment that we have needed but not seen in the past, give them their due on that. I don't think that they have any great vision for transport, I don't think they have any long term strategic plan for it. In some ways they see it as an inconvenience rather than as a real opportunity for driving change. It's maybe just because I come from the area I come from, representing an island constituency, where transport underpins absolutely everything. Go to Orkney and Shetland and people will tell you, get transport right and everything else just falls into place. And that really does underpin my whole thinking on transport. It's not the front line sexy department like

Alistair Carmichael is the MP for the 31 islands of Orkney and Shetland, the most northerly UK constituency, where he was born, in 1965, and brought up.

Prior to studying law in Aberdeen he worked as a waiter, eventually working his way up to hotel manager. His establishment was regularly patronised by coach tour customers.

After working as a solicitor, he was voted in as MP for Orkney and Shetland, a safe Liberal Democrat seat, in 2001.

From then until 2005 he was Northern Ireland spokesman and then worked in the shadow Home Affairs team, until he took over from Mark Oaten as shadow foreign secretary when the disgraced former leadership candidate resigned.

When Sir Menzies Campbell was elected leader in March 2006, Carmichael joined the shadow cabinet as shadow secretary of state for transport.



Transport ministers in this government are like black holes, they absorb light, whereas what they could be doing is driving a lot of the change that is needed to achieve the rhetoric



health and education but it is crucial to just about every decision that these departments will make.

CBW: Do you think having Parliament in London, where there is a fabulous bus system, er, do you think there is a fabulous bus system?

AC: I think it is a fabulous bus system. I know that people in London will vilify me for saying that, but in fact the proof of the tremendous service that people have in London is that bus use is going up, whereas in most of the country, apart from a few honourable exceptions, bus use is going down. I think we are reaping some of the rewards now of de-regulation from the 1980s and I'm not arguing for

re-regulation, tempting though it sometimes is. I think we need to revisit that, and that is going to be one of my priorities.

CBW: What is your thinking on that then? Partial regulation?

AC: Whatever regulation you have has got to be one that is a partnership between the industry and government. London is quite a good model for that. You have a model where there is a genuine partnership between the mayor and TfL on one hand, and private providers on the other hand. It comes back to the opportunities that buses in particular in urban areas offer for social inclusion.

My impression as someone who

spends a lot of time in London and uses buses a lot is that buses are used a lot by people in low wages and fixed incomes. If I'm going for my early morning flight to Aberdeen I'm quite often on buses in London at quarter past five in the morning. I'm struck by the fact that at that time the people who are using the buses are predominantly not white. If they are white then they are probably speaking some eastern European language, and I'm very often the only person on that bus wearing a tie. If you are going to talk about social inclusion for people on low incomes and targeting assistance to them, then the cost and the nature and availability of bus services at that time of the morning is a very small but obvious way of approaching that.

CBW: But it is expensive.

AC: It is expensive, but it is giving money to the people who need it most. I can get a taxi if I am late. If their bus does not turn up that often means they lose a day's wages. And that can have a much more severe impact on them than me missing a flight to Aberdeen.

CBW: So you like the London system and you would like to see something similar around the rest of the country?

AC: I am very cautious about saying something works in London so it must be able to work in the rest of the country. One of the most remarkable features of the way in which this government has conducted themselves has been the centralisation of power and the attitude that Whitehall knows best.

CBW: I know one of your closest colleagues is Tavish Scott, the Transport Minister in Scotland.

AC: He represents Shetland in the Scottish parliament, so he's a close colleague and a close friend actually

CBW: He has been making some announcements in the last few days about the Scottish National Transport Strategy.

Are you developing your transport policies alongside each other?

AC: Very much so.

CBW: Because he is also talking about taking a closer look at the London model.

AC: Yes. Tavish and I come from very much the same direction of travel. I think that the strategy document that he launched last week is a model for what Alistair Darling could be doing in the UK and hasn't really done. What Tavish did in Scotland for free travel for pensioners is what now, three years later, is just being done for England and Wales. >

Above: Alistair Carmichael MP pictured at Portcullis House, April 25. Photos by David Boughton

WIN!

An Italian Supercar Experience

when you subscribe to **CBW**

Subscribe to *CBW* between now and May 31 and you could win an Italian Supercar Experience at Thruxton Motorsport Centre in Hampshire. The Lamborghini Murcielago and Ferrari 430 are two of the best cars **EVER** made.

Now **YOU** can drive these amazing cars back to back around the UK's fastest race track. Prior to driving the supercars you will learn the circuit and perfect your technique in Thruxton's new fleet of Mazda RX-8's and Mercedes Benz SLK 350's. (go to thruxtonracing.co.uk for more information).

You can subscribe to Coach & Bus Week for just £69 and receive 51 issues direct to your door and get the chance to win an Italian Supercar Experience.



And that's not all...
As a Coach & Bus Week
subscriber you will receive:

- FREE Coach Destinations 2006
- FREE CBW Industry Guide 2006
- FREE Out+About, the monthly coach tourism magazine
- FREE Minibus, the monthly guide to the minibus industry

*Thruxton competition ends May 31, 2006. Rules apply.

CALL 0870 830 4969

quoting 0022 or order online at www.subscription.co.uk/cbw/0022

SUBSCRIPTIONS - NEED TO CONTACT US?

Simply visit us online at:
www.subscription.co.uk/help
Using the subscriber number printed on the
polywrap of your magazine you can:

- Change your address
- Update your email address

■ Advise us of a change of name
■ Check your start or expiry issue date
...24 hours a day, every day!
Or
E-MAIL cbw@subscription.co.uk
TELEPHONE 0870 830 4969
TELEPHONE OVERSEAS +44 1858 438782
All phone lines are open 8am-9.30pm Monday
to Friday; Saturdays 8am-4pm

POST CBW Subscriptions, Tower House,
Sovereign Park, Market Harborough,
LEICESTER LE16 9EF.

Subscription rates

1 Year (UK)	£69
2 Years (UK)	£120
1 Year (Eire/Europe)	£115
1 Year (Rest of the World), Airmail	£140

Interview

CBW: You must relish the mess that that has turned out to be.

AC: I don't actually, it frustrates me more than anything else. It sounds a bit pious because I am in politics to try and make things better for people. The fact that we have a system in place which is there with good intentions, but just isn't going to work because it has been set up in a way that we always thought would be difficult if not next to impossible to make work does not cause me any great satisfaction.

CBW: I want to talk about another hot subject, school transport (David Cameron made references to school transport the day before the interview). Is this an area of transport that you are looking at?

AC: It's not an area we've done an awful



Go to Orkney and Shetland and people will tell you, get transport right and everything else just falls into place

lot of work on to be candid with you. I think it is an area of particular concern within the inner cities, it comes back to what I was saying about social mobility being attached to physical mobility, and the opportunity for children to move between schools in order to meet their own particular educational needs. It actually also has an impact on the more mainstream bus travel, because if you take school children out of buses at peak times using dedicated school transport then that frees up an awful lot more capacity in mainstream transport. It seems a no-brainer to me.

CBW: What about the fuel tax regime that governs transport? Aviation is not taxed at all, buses get a fuel duty rebate, where as coaches get no help at all.

AC: The tax regime is a product of historical evolution and accident rather than any strategic planning, and I like to think that if you started with a blank sheet of paper you would not come up with anything that looks like what we have got. To take aviation, there is no doubt in my mind at all that it is going to have to start paying its environmental dues. We need to start taxing aviation at a rate that recognises the environmental damage that it can do.

CBW: You would do that unilaterally?

AC: In terms of moving to carbon tax we see that as being something which comes as a result of international moves, but for domestic aviation that is something that can be done.

CBW: Buses get their duty rebated but coaches never do.

AC: That's interesting actually. Because I am new in the job I didn't actually know that. I'll need to have a look at that. In principle I don't see why that should be. I can't see any real reason why buses should be treated differently than coaches, maybe that's an example of historical accident.

CBW: Coaches are definitely part of the public transport mix

AC: They must be. One of the exciting things you see at the moment is the coach industry itself waking up to that, and you see somebody like Brian Souter challenging the accepted way of doing things with Megabus.

CBW: Do you know Brian Souter?

AC: I know of him. If I can put it fairly neutrally, I'm more impressed with some of his commercial decisions than his social ones. He took a very prominent role in a campaign in Scotland opposing the abolition of section 28 which was the Tory legislation that forbade the promotion - whatever that is - of homosexuality in schools. It was an unpleasant campaign to be involved in.

CBW: How did you come to be in charge of transport for the Liberal Democrats?

AC: The straightforward answer to that is that I was asked to do it by Menzies Campbell when he set up his new shadow cabinet. The joke around Westminster was here is the MP who has more need for transport than any other. Transport has always been something that has interested me because of where I was brought up apart from anything else. I see it as a holistic issue, maybe that was what caught Menzies eye.

CBW: What is your strategy for going about developing a robust policy now?

Alistair Carmichael works from Portcullis House, on the corner of Bridge Street and Victoria Embankment, just across the street from Big Ben. An audit of MP's office space in the 1990s resulted in the need for a new office block in addition to the Houses Of Parliament, and Portcullis House was finished in 2001. It was developed in conjunction with the new Westminster tube station, on which it sits, separated by a huge slab of concrete to make it bombproof.

The building houses 210 MPs - around a third of the total. Unofficially, each party is given a floor each of the five-story building which is arranged around a central courtyard. The ground floor is given over to a restaurant called 'The Adjournment', a café, 'The Debate', and a snack shop, 'The Despatch Box'.



I don't understand why the Labour Party in government hasn't done more with transport, because transport can do so much for a Labour government

AC: At the moment I am talking to every sector imaginable, from Sea & Water, British Airways, First Group, I've met Ian Dodds from Stagecoach. I'm not offering the industry a blank piece of paper to write my transport policy because I have political objectives I want to achieve through transport policy that they will not necessarily want to achieve commercially, and that's where you come back to this need for partnership between the industry and government. I'm also meeting some of the pressure groups of which transport has an inordinate number. I've met more geeks than I would have believed possible. There are some areas and bus and coach is in the most urgent need of revision. Aviation, we just finished our policy development work on before I took over. Rail, road user pricing, we need to find a way of putting that firmly back on the agenda.

CBW: Are those your priorities then - bus and coach, rail, road charging?

AC: I hesitate to say they are my priorities, but in terms of the order of working through it, yes. I hope to have policy pretty well overhauled by next spring, in all the different constituent parts, and thereafter have some sort of transport mini-manifesto that we can publish. ●

'Stop Fuel Theft!'

- Prevents access to tank, while allowing unrestricted filling.
- Prevents trash being put into tank
- Wide range to suit most coach and bus fuel tanks

Dipstop . . .



Contact JBL Mechanical Engineers

Sunnyside, Edgebolton, Shawbury,
Shropshire SY4 4EI

Tel: 01939 251351
Fax: 01939 251051
Mobile: 07831 332913

MZ 'CHARLY' ELECTRIC FOLD-UP SCOOTERS



**UNUSED AS BRAND NEW
OVER £750 LIST PRICE**

OUR PRICE ONLY £250

**2000 BEULAS EL MUNDO
51 SEATS - £75,000**

AVAILABLE JANUARY
2003 TRI-AXLE NEOPLAN STARLINER
44 SEATS AND FULL SPECIFICATION



**PARRYS
INTERNATIONAL**

www.parrys.info

**01922
414576**

Retrofitting school bus seats?



Supply. Fit. Certification.

Cogent, your single source supplier.

Cogent is acknowledged as one of the leading designers, manufacturers and suppliers of passenger seating. Now we offer full fitting and certification to coaches and buses at competitive prices.

Who better to supply and fit Cogent seats than Cogent themselves!



cogent

Cogent Passenger Seating Limited Prydwen Road, Swansea West Industrial Park, Swansea SA5 4HN
T 01792 585444 F 01792 588191 E enquiries@cogentseating.co.uk www.cogentseating.co.uk



All eyes on Transit at CV Show

Ford's long-awaited new Transit was launched to the public at the CV Show last week - alongside new offerings from Mercedes-Benz and Volkswagen with their new Sprinter and Crafter models. Other van makers will launch their new Euro IV ranges much nearer to the October deadline.

The burning question was: 'had **Ford** done enough to retain Transit's lead in light commercial vehicle marketplace?'. And at first sight it appears there is little to choose between them. Full details of the new Transit are featured in a separate *CBW* article next week.

Crafter differs from Sprinter only in that **VW** fits its own engines, gearboxes, seats and its frontal design is altered to create a physical distinction. Transit comes to the market also as a fully redesigned package with new engines, gearboxes and a high level of safety equipment designed to keep drivers and other road users safer.

A factory-built Transit minibus and a **Tourneo Connect** were both available to view and each has undergone extensive changes. Major improvements to Tourneo include Euro IV compliant 1.8-litre Duratorq TDCi

engines with engine power outputs of 75bhp and 90bhp. A new 110bhp diesel engine variant also becomes available for the first time and is said to deliver class-leading torque. Both the interior and exterior of the Tourneo Connect have been improved, and the vehicle's in-car entertainment has been significantly upgraded. The long wheelbase Tourneo Connect LX is now available in five- and, for the first time, eight-seat versions.

Changes to the 1.8-litre Duratorq TDCi engine include a new combustion system and new fuel injectors to provide a smoother, more responsive and quieter drive. It employs an ultra-high pressure common-rail direct injection system for smoother and more responsive power delivery. The new 110bhp version is one of the most powerful engines available in its sector with a massive 280Nm of torque for >



The much-anticipated new Ford Transit made its debut at the show: **1** Long wheelbase version **2** Stylish lights on the new from-the-ground-up vehicle **3** Transits and Tourneos feature much-improved entertainment systems. Steering wheel is from the Focus C-Max **4** Tourneo Connect with optional 15" alloy wheels **5** Transit seats

New Vehicles



1-3 New VW Crafter will be available in September. Generous opening width for new Crafter. There will be four versions of its five-cylinder engine



6,7 Renault Master: Nine-seat Master offers masses of interior storage space



4,5 LDV Maxus: Building on existing work the new vehicle offers plenty of interior space. Narrow seats were not to everyone's tastes



flexible and effortless performance. The existing 75bhp and 90bhp versions produce reduced emissions - claiming no loss of performance or fuel economy. The 75bhp version is upgraded to include common-rail TDCi technology.

The long-wheelbase Tourneo Connect LX features a two-tone body colour front bumper, body colour rear bumpers and end caps, a chrome grille and new wheel trims on 15in steel wheels. Optional are stylish 15in alloy wheels and an extra row of rear passenger seats. CD players are now included to replace cassette players in the audio equipment. The system features 24 pre-set stations and a single slot CD player. The top-of-the-range system features a six-CD changer, loadable through a single slot. It also has 24 pre-set radio stations, but has a larger display screen.

Gary Whittam, commercial vehicles

director, Ford of Britain, said: "Transit and Tourneo Connect are a great success story - we now sell more than 24,000 a year. Its strength comes from the fact that, unlike its competitors, it's engineered from the ground up to commercial vehicle dependability levels. This makes it the natural choice for commercial and personal use customers looking for rock solid dependability."

The **VW Crafter** will be available from September and was launched showing all four versions of its five-cylinder engine, offering power ratings of 88, 109, 136 and 163bhp. **Mercedes-Benz Sprinter**, by comparison, features four-cylinder engines offering 88, 109, 129 and 150bhp plus a new 3.0 litre V6 producing 184bhp and a massive 400Nm torque.

Also new at the CV show was **LDV's** own Maxus minibus. Taking the work done already by converters Oughtred

& Harrison and seat manufacturer Rescroft, the company has worked on its own development. Although it has created far more interior space for passengers it has been at the expense of comfort. The Isringhausen seats chosen for the display model were painfully narrow and mounted on legs sporting a crude metal brace which looked rather unappealing.

BMC is also entering the factory-built minibus sector and showed its 14-seat Megastar in right-hand drive form for the first time. This was equipped with Grammer seating which proved quite comfortable and was made reasonably accessible through the sliding side entrance by a respectable cutaway step in the saloon floor and a full-width slide-out step. Although its finish lacks some refinement it will be pitched at the entry-level market and no doubt win sales based on attractive pricing.

Vauxhall's Movano minibus was



8 Fiat Ducato 9 BMC 14-seat Megastar 10 Citroën 17-seat Relay 1800 Enterprise specification



11,12 Bluebird Vehicles showed its Transporter-based Tucana on the Eberspacher stand



shown for the first time with a Techshift gearbox and the raised flooring which was introduced last year.

Renault showed a similarly configured Master without the 'robotised' gearbox - which is currently available as a half-priced option at just £400. Alongside was the nine-seat Master which offers a high level of comfort with plenty of passenger space combined with cavernous luggage capacity. ESP electronic stability has been added to the standard equipment list.

On the innovative electric drive vehicle front, **Modec** launched its range of electric delivery vehicles and was reportedly inundated with enquiries. Director Tony Guy said there had been 145 very interested potential customers before the close of play on the first day alone. He confirmed a minibus version was in the pipeline for later in the year and that it gets its official launch at the coach and bus

exhibition at the end of this year. CBW will be given an exclusive preview of the new development sometime in the next three months.

Offerings from **Citroën** and **Fiat**, both 17-seat minibuses, were unchanged in the run-up to Euro IV compliance. Revised vehicles will be launched nearer the time.

Allison announced a further continuation of its long-standing association with Alexander Dennis and is to supply its 2100 automatic transmissions for the Enviro200 Dart. The new project is aimed at delivering improved performance and comfort alongside reduced operating costs. Allison says its transmission package offers distinct advantages in terms of size, weight and fuel efficiency, reduced strain on drive-train components, lower maintenance costs and less vehicle downtime. All the 2100 series transmissions will be

factory-fitted with Allison's TransSynd synthetic oil. The company claims it outlasts conventional mineral oils by up to five times and will reduce component wear and servicing costs accordingly.

Goodyear Dunlop claims to have developed the most comprehensive truck and PSV tyre support infrastructure in Europe following increased investment and restructuring.

The entire TruckForce network is now completely independent of the Hi-Q division - which now concentrates solely on car tyres. It boasts over 1,100 support centres strategically located along key European routes. Each centre has dedicated staff and equipment to cater for all tyre-related requirements and the business is backed up by Actionline roadside assistance and the FleetOnlineSolutions internet management systems. ●

13 Vauxhall Vivaro 14,15 Vauxhall Movano, with Techshift gearbox option, featured raised seating/sunken gangway

Deliveries

Have you taken delivery of a new vehicle and want to tell the world about it? Email all the details and pictures to cbwinbox@rouncymedia.co.uk or write to the address on page 3

ANGLIAN BUS AND COACH

Suffolk bus operator Anglian Bus and Coach has recently taken five Volvo B7RLEs – it's first new Volvos – as part of their fleet renewal and upgrade programme.

Bodied by Wrightbus, they have 44 seats and provision for a further 39 standees, have Mobitec LED blinds to the front, side and rear and manual wheelchair ramps.

They will provide a six-day a week service on routes around Norfolk and Suffolk, in co-operation with Norfolk and Suffolk county councils. Three will operate on the 588 Halesworth-Norwich service, with one each on the 003 Harleston-Norwich and 580 Diss-Great Yarmouth routes.

Andrew Pursey, Anglian's Director explained: "The primary

reason for choosing the Volvo product was the back-up and warranty on offer. The two-year bumper-to-bumper and third-year driveline cover far surpasses their competitors' offer. This level of commitment and confidence from the manufacturer gives me peace of mind."

Anglian Bus and Coach, based in Beccles, is an independent, family-owned business, celebrating 29 years in operation. Very much a forward-thinking company, they have recently moved to new purpose-built premises which boast full maintenance facilities complete with a team of qualified engineers, Department for Transport MOT test lane and bus wash.



FACT FILE

Chassis/Body Volvo B7RLE/
Wrightbus Eclipse
Engine Volvo D7C 275bhp
Transmission ZF auto
Seats 44 + 39
Spec Standard
Supplied by Volvo Bus
01926 401777

THOMAS OF BARRY

After buying two Setras last year, Thomas of Barry was so impressed with their performance that it has bought two more.

All four coaches are high-spec S315 GT HD models, and they are proving to be a sound investment both in terms of their quality and their fuel economy.

"We are using the Setras primarily on contracts for national tour operators who want to ensure that their customers have the best possible travel experience," says Colin Jones, the company's coach and tours manager. "The Setras offer a high-quality travelling environment, exceptional ride quality, and have proved extremely popular with our customers."

Thomas of Barry has been running coaches



FACT FILE

Chassis/Body Setra S315 GT
HD integral
Engine Mercedes-Benz
12-litre
Transmission ASTronic
Seats 49
Spec Climate control
Sold by EvoBus (UK) 02476
626000

since 1913 and to demonstrate that it operates to the highest quality standards has ISO9002 quality accreditation – and it

displays this prominently on all its vehicles. It currently runs 32 coaches.

"We are proud of what we do, and of the fact that we do the job well," Colin Jones continues, "so we carry the ISO9002 logo on the sides of our coaches to let existing and potential customers know that we support our investment in high-quality vehicles with investment behind the scenes – in our modern purpose-built workshop, for example."

TM TRAVEL

The first example of Plaxton's new Centro midibus is now in service with TM Travel of Chesterfield, and TM Travel's Tim Watts is delighted with the vehicle.

"It is attractive, spacious and ideal for the contract for which we've purchased it, a lengthy route linking Clay Cross, Bolsover and Crystal Peaks," he says. "Feedback from customers and drivers has been very positive."

TM Travel's Centro is a 10.7-metre, 40-seater based on a VDL Bus SB120 chassis. The Centro has a strong aluminium frame, designed for longevity and ease of repair. The vehicle for TM Travel has gasket glazing and a manual ramp for wheelchair access.

A novel feature of the

TM Travel Centro is a flip-down flatscreen monitor which is linked to the five-camera CCTV system, and shows passengers that the CCTV is in operation. This can be valuable on runs carrying schoolchildren where it discourages bad behaviour. At other times the screen can simply be clipped back into place on the ceiling.

The SB120 is the first VDL single-decker in the TM Travel fleet, and Tim Watts is impressed by the 150bhp Cummins ISBe engine.

FACT FILE

Chassis/Body VDL Bus
SB120/Plaxton Centro
Engine Cummins ISBe
150bhp
Transmission ZF auto
Seats 40
Spec Standard
Sold by Plaxton 01909
551166





Business Manager

Eastbourne Buses is the major provider of bus services in and around Eastbourne and southern East Sussex. We are looking to further strengthen our management team by the addition of this new post. It is envisaged that the opportunity may exist in the future for promotion to board level.

Reporting to the Managing Director, the successful applicant will be responsible for the planning and management of the Company's bus services, cost effective scheduling, liaison with local authorities, marketing of services to our customers and negotiations with staff representatives on operational issues.

Applications are invited from suitably experienced and enthusiastic people with excellent customer service skills, who enjoy working in a friendly environment based in one of the premier resorts on the south coast. Salary package to be negotiated.

Please apply, with current cv to:

Steve Barnett
Managing Director
Eastbourne Buses Ltd
Birch Road
Eastbourne
BN23 6PD

to be received by Friday 12 May 2006.

Anthony's Travel

Transport / Operations Manager

Due to the retirement of the current manager we are seeking a suitable replacement. A professional transport qualification whilst desirable is not essential.

Anthony's Travel is based in Runcorn and in operating a mixed fleet of modern executive coaches of varying capacities is arguably one of the premier executive coach operators in the Cheshire and Merseyside area.

Responsible to the partners the successful candidate must have a full Class One PCV 11ce be able to demonstrate their leadership skills and must have:

- A proven record in the bus and coach industry in all its aspects.
- The experience of managing a sizeable fleet and its workforce
- An ability to work using both computer based and manual operation systems
- A comprehensive knowledge of all current tachograph and working time directive rules and regulations
- Being proactive in their management of our staff, their employment requirements and Health & Safety
- Their ability to contribute to the development of the business and its profitability
- A flexible approach to the varied demands of such an operation

In return we offer a competitive salary package.

Applicants should send their C.V. to **Richard Bamber** at the address below.

Or Email; enquiries@anthonys-travel.co.uk

To view our fleet and see who we are go to,

www.anthonys-travel.co.uk

Simply the Best

8 Cormorant Drive,
Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 4UD

Tel: 01928 561460 Fax: 01928 561460

E-mail: enquiries@anthonys-travel.co.uk
www.anthonys-travel.co.uk



People

New MD for Thamesdown

Swindon's largest bus operator, Thamesdown Transport, has a new managing director. Paul Jenkins, who joins in May, was previously First's bus operations director for the Somerset and West area. He succeeds John Owen, who is to retire.

John Owen said: "It is with sadness that I shall be leaving but I will be 60 at the beginning of June and feel that the time is right for me - and also right for the company. Paul is joining a loyal and dedicated group of

people and I wish him every success in his new role.

Leader of Swindon Council Mike Bawden said: "We are delighted with Paul's appointment. John will be a hard act to follow, but we're confident that Paul's track record speaks for itself. Thamesdown is a key partner to the council in delivery of services to the Swindon community and, with 25 years in the transport sector to his credit, we're confident that Paul is just the man to lead them."

JMP Associates expands

Malcolm Jones has joined transport planners JMP Consulting's Bristol office as an Associate after 12 months as associate director heading WSP's transportation group activities in its Bristol and Cardiff offices

JMP has also recruited Esther Bridie-Van Kesteren as a senior transport planner in its central London office. She previously worked in Amsterdam in the Department of Infrastructure.

Westway Community Transport

Westway Community Transport
Requires a

FLEET MANAGER £23K - £27K

Depending on skills & experience Full-time

Can you fill this key role at the heart of our transport operations, balancing the management, maintenance and development of our fleet to meet the growing needs of our member groups & drivers? This key post will manage our mixed fleet of minibuses, PCV coach and wheelchair accessible vehicles ensuring that the fleet is maintained to a high standard. This post plays a key role and is essential in order to ensure that our services are delivered smoothly and efficiently.

Westway CT is an expanding Social Enterprise providing transport services to the local voluntary sector and individuals with mobility difficulties. Working from our purpose built, award-winning premises in North Kensington, Westway CT has over 600 member organisations, 1,200+ individual users, 11 workers and over 1,100 registered volunteer drivers. We are a lively and enthusiastic organisation to work in, with a high level of job satisfaction. We value the individual contribution of all our staff, welcome their ideas and initiatives, and seek to combine them in a good, creative team.

Applicants must be 21 or over with a clean UK driving licence held for over 2 years with a D category. Candidates should have considerable transport experience and ideally hold a Certificate of Professional Competence in National Passenger operations. Experience of working with voluntary and statutory organisations, an awareness of the transport needs of people with mobility difficulties and previous experience of working with volunteers is desirable.

For an application form and more information please e-mail fleet@westwayct.org.uk or send an A4 self addressed envelope (stamp not required) to:

Westway Community Transport,
240 Acklam Rd, London W10 5YG

Closing Date **Monday 17th May 2006 12 Noon**

Westway CT is an Equal Opportunities employer. Concerned to ensure its services are sensitive to the needs of all its users
www.westwayct.org.uk



AD COACH SALES

NEWBRIDGE COACH DEPOT
WITHERIDGE, DEVON EX16 8PY

Scania

2003 Scania Irizar 53 seat, air con, auto

2001 Scania Irizar 49 seat, exec

Volvo

2001 Volvo B10M Plaxton Paragon 49-53 seats,
auto, choice

2000 Volvo Plaxton Paragon 49 seat, exec

1993 Volvo B10M Plaxton Premier 49 seats, exec

Other

2000 Neoplan Transliner, 51 seats exec, manual

Many other vehicles available - ring for details
Phone 01884 860767 Fax 01884 860711
Mobile 07836 345304 or visit our website

www.adcoachsales.co.uk

bullocks
comfort as standard

0161 428 5265
www.bullockscoaches.com



1996 (P-reg) Volvo B10M Van Hool Alizee.
51 reclining seats, centre sunken toilet, boiler, fridge,
video, double glazing. MoT. June '07,
Excellent Condition **£51,000 ono.**



1996 Volvo B10M Caetano Algarve II.
55 seats (graffiti trim), courier seat, double glazing
MoT - April 2007, Excellent Condition.
£42,000 ono.

For further information contact Steve Bullock on
07778 352 866 or 0161 428 5265

Bullocks Coaches, Stockport Road, Cheadle, Cheshire SK8 2AG

Bright-Tech Developments Ltd.

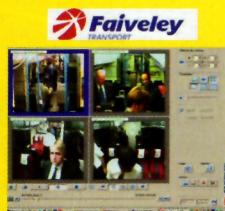
Destination Displays, On-Bus Systems and CCTV



Beat the Rush
Travel Green Line 55

Led Displays.

- * Lifetime Warranty.
- * Fully DDA and VCA compliant.
- * Flat or curved displays.
- * Free WinScreen 4 software.
- * Flash-card data download.
- * Free spares service.



CCTV

- * High Quality digital imaging.
- * Large 120GB storage capacity.
- * Shock sensor on hard disk.
- * Ruggedised design.
- * Free configuration and commissioning.
- * Easy editing facilities.



BRISTO PLACE

PowerBlind.

- * New Mark 5 design.
- * Completely sealed units.
- * Bar-code error-check facility.
- * Message updates via flash EPROM.
- * Free editing software.
- * Can be used with our LED displays.



Fleets Point House, Willis Way, Poole, BH15 3SS.

TEL: 01202-679-627 EMAIL: SALES@BRIGHT-TECH.CO.UK

Bright-Tech is an ISO9001-2000 registered Company.



Finance may be arranged by our Associate Company on Buses, Coaches, Workshops & Buildings
Phone Now for a Quote
0141 576 5127

Blythswood Motors

For information please visit our website : www.blythswoodmotors.co.uk
or email : blythswoodmotors@aol.com
or call on : 0141 221 3165 / evenings 0141 639 6107 fax : 0141 221 3172
Address : Office & Showroom 1175 Argyle Street, Glasgow G3 8TQ

New Yard Directions

M8 to Junction 27 Paisley/
Renfrew at roundabout go
back on yourselves onto
Renfrew Road, Next
roundabout follow signs for
Westway with Fire Station
on your right, turn left into
Porterfield Road then turn
left into Westway Ind Estate

WE HAVE A LIMITED NUMBER OF PRE-REG MERCEDES BUSES & COACHES NOT REQUIRING DIGITAL TACHOS

Iveco Service Buses



1998, 26+6
Seats, Air
Suspension,
Large Engine,
Telma, Tested
Also
1995 19+15
Seats, Not Large
Engine, Tested

Dennis Javelin



REG : K233 BRJ
42 Highback Seats
Belts, Power Door, 6
Speed, Reading Lights,
Forced Air, Air Con



REG : K987 SUS
70 Highback Seats,
Cummins, Kneeling
Lift, Double Door at
Rear Pull Down Step



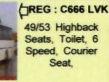
REG : K660 PHW
40 Highback Seats,
Belts, Power Door,
6 Speed, Reading
Lights, Forced Air

Low Mileage
Ex W.D.
8.5m to 11.5m
REG : MIL 2350
Duple Body, 57 Seats,
Belts, Cummins,
Reading Lights, Forced
Air, 6 Speed

Tigers / Setras



REG : YIB 2397
57 Seats, Belts, Reading
Lights, Forced Air, Boot
Tested



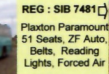
REG : C666 LVK
49/53 Highback
Seats, Toilet, 6
Speed, Courier
Seat



REG : J26 UNY
53 Seats, ZF Gearbox,
Reading Lights, Forced
Air, Boot



REG : SIB 7481
Plaxton Paramount
51 Seats, ZF Auto,
Belts, Reading
Lights, Forced Air



Plaxton Paramount
51 Seats, ZF Auto,
Belts, Reading
Lights, Forced Air

Mercedes Service Buses



709D
Alexanders, 26
Seats, Tested,
All Alloy
Bodies
Now Reduced
From
£ 4500.00

Leyland DAF



Good Choice of
Used
From £ 2000.00

Standard & Extra Long & Wheelchair Access

Now available with Power Door, Destination, Dual
Purpose or Service Bus, Extra Long, Plug or Glider
Door, Luggage Pen or Super Luxury extra Long
4 years Warranty

Ford Transit



Available New

17-15 Seats
137 Engine,
Electric
Windows &
Mirrors, Air
Con

Choice of 2003 15 & 17 Seats Also 1994 /
1997 Great Choice & Bargains Also new and
used Tourneo GLS from £ 13000.00

Ford Tourneo



Metallic Silver or Bronze GLX 9 Seats,
Air Con, Alloys
Used 2004 Only 30000 m

VW Transporter



Available from Stock - 8 Seat + Driver, Choice
of Colour, Engine Size & Spec, Power Lift
Wheelchair Access also available

Mercedes 33 Seat



Top Coach Spec

33 Highback Coach Seats & Boot
29 Seats and Jumbo Boot
25 Seats and Jumbo Jumbo Boot

ZF Manual or Allison Auto, 3 Point Belts,
Reading Lights, Forced Air Ventilation,
Double Glazing, Tinted Glass, Arm
Rests, Curtains, PA System, CD Player,
Choice of Interiors & 20 MPG - Air con
can be retro fitted

Choice of Used Available

1993 - New 33 Seat, Manual & Auto
1999 - 2004 29 Seat Extra Large Boot
1999 - 2000 25 Seat Jumbo Size Boot

Wheelchair

New DDA 32 Highback Seats, Belts, Auto,
Lift, up to 10 W/c's, Flat Floor - stock
New 29 Highback Seats, One Wheelchair &
Lift, DDA, Manual or Auto - Stock
Mercedes 814D New 23 Seats 5 W/C's, Side
Lift, Dropwell Boot, Luxury
Mercedes 614D 2000 16 or 24 Coach Seats,
Power Door, Belts, 3 to 5 Wheelchairs
Mercedes 413D 16 Seats up to 5 Wheelchairs
Mercedes Twin Wheel 411 New
conversion 16/5 Wheelchairs Underfloor
Taillift £ 22000.00 low mileage
Mercedes Vito 8 + Driver up to 3 W/chairs
- also available in Volkswagen or Ford
Leyland 16 Seats, Under floor Lift, Luxury
Extra Long, Power Door, in Stock Choice



Leyland Double Deck



Lion TL11

1986-89 84-88 Seats,
ZF Auto, Double or Single
Door, Turbo, 55 MPH
Choice Available



Olympian

1983-88 Northern Counties,
72-77 Seats, Low Bridge
Gardens or Cummins ZF
Choice Available

Scania Double Deck



Alexander Body

1988, 78/8 Service Seats,
Voith Auto or ZF Auto,
Destination, Tested,



May fit belts or Coach Seats,

Excellent Choice

Super Low Floor



Dennis Dart

10.7m, 1998, 43/19 Service Seats,
Destination, Power Door, Auto,
Kneeling



Neoplan

11.7m, 1999, 45 Semi High Service
Seats, Wheelchair Ramp, ZF Auto,
Extra Large Luggage Pen,
Retrimmed Choice of 2



Optare Excel

11.5m, 1998, Mercedes Engine,
45/21 Semi High Luxury Seats, Auto
Gearbox, Luggage Pen, Tested



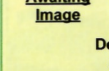
Optare Mini

2001, Mercedes Engine, 26/29 or
29/22 Service Seats, Morse Auto
Gearbox, Ferry Lift Wheelchair
Space for one Wheelchair



Optare Solo

2000 29 Seat, Tested



Dennis Dart Euro 4
Available Early

MCW Open Tops



Metroliners

1985 - 1986 84 Seats
(63 up 20 down)
Cummins ZF, Tri-axle
Choice Available



Metrobus

71 Seats on Air
Suspension, Auto

Mercedes 24 Seat



Choice New Luxury, Welfare or Wheelchair
all Power Door, Large Boot - In Stock Now
1996 - 2000 Excellent Choice of 9 Used from £ 8000.00

Mercedes 16 Seat

311D 16 Seat
£ 26995.00
3 yrs Warranty



311D 16 Seat
£ 26995.00
3 yrs Warranty

Extra Long Luxury 16 Recliners, Boot, Courier Seat
New 413D Luxury 16 Seat, Boot, DVD, Full Luxury
New Luxury 16 Seat, Boot, non Extended
New 413D Wheelchair Accessible 16 Seat, Luxury +
choice of used
2001 411D Wheelchair Accessible 16/5 wheelchairs @
£22000.00 low mileage

Dual Purpose

New Dual Purpose, 33 Highback Seats,
Kneeling, Manual or Auto - Used available
New DDA 32 Highback Seats, Belts, Auto, Lift,
up to 10 W/c's, Flat Floor - stock
New Beaver Plus 2 Plus 33 Highback Coach
Seat, Luggage Racks & Boot - Used available
New Beaver Service 29 Seats + Pen DDA
Manual, 65 mph, 20 mpg



New Leyland Daf Extra Long, Power Door,
Service or Dual Purpose, Destination



1998 Neoplan Transliner



N316 53 Coach Seats, Cummins Engine,
Belts, 6 Speed, Tinted Glass, Curtains,
Courier Seat, Air Con

1996 Volvo Jonckheere



49/53 Recliners, Belts, 6 Speed, Centre Toilet

2001 Ayat Atlas



53 Seater, Single Deck, Air Con, Tested

DAF MB 230



Plaxton, 53 Seats, Belts, 6 Speed Gearbox,
Tinted Glass, Curtains, Courier Seat, Tested

Choice of 23 New and 46 Used Mercedes In Stock Ready for Immediate Delivery

Ensignbus

DOUBLE DECKER SPECIALIST

1992 J REG OPTARE DELTA'S , DAF SB220'S ,

51 seaters, very good condition , good selection.



1991 H REG DENNIS DOMINATOR

Gardner 6LXB/Voith 4 speed automatic (55mph), East Lancs low height body, 13ft 8in, 76 seats.



1989 F REG LEYLAND OLYMPIANS

Cummins L10/ZF, Northern Counties semi low height body, 75 seats, large choice



2000 OPTARE EXCELS,

Cummins engines, currently 19 seats with 3 point belts, but could be upseated to 39, very straight.



1983/4 A/B REG LEYLAND OLYMPIANS,

Gardner 6LXB, ECW 77 seat lowheight bodies, recent retrims.



1990 DENNIS DART,

Cummins/Allison, Carlyle body fitted with Plaxton Pointer front, 28 seats.



1983 LEYLAND TIGERS

Rebodied with East Lancs EL2000 bodies, 55 seaters



1991-92 LEYLAND OLYMPIANS

Cummins L10/ZF, Alexander R type bodies, either 74 seat dual door or 78 single door, large choice



1994/7 N/R REG MCW METRORIDER ,

25 seaters, great condition, choice of 3.



1998 S REG DENNIS DARTS,

Cummins/Allison Plaxton Pointer bodies, 39 seaters, choice of 3.



1999 PP IVECO EURO MIDI

Indcar Maxim, 29 seats, air-con, TV, video, extremely good condition, supplied with new test.



1989 PP DENNIS CONDORS

Gardner/Voith, Duple Metsec bodies, 2 door, 106 seaters



1993 K REG DENNIS DART,

Cummins/Allison, 40 seater, Wrights bodies



1997 P REG VOLVO OLYMPIANS,

Alexander bodies, 2 doors, 68 seats, or can be single doored and upseated to 78



1995 M REG VOLVO OLYMPIAN,

Volvo/Voith, Alexander body, 82 seats , new test.



1990 DENNIS CONDORS,

Arriving now from Hong Kong. Cummins L10 engines, Voith 3 speed auto gearboxes, tinted windows, full air-con throughout, 94 seats with 2 doors or 95 with single door conversion. Refurbished to Firstgroup spec 4 years ago. Limited number available.



1989 G REG LEYLAND OLYMPIANS

Cummins L10/ZF, Northern Counties body, 2 doors, 75 seats



1988 LEYLAND TIGER

Repowered with Volvo THD engine, Plaxton 3500, 51 seats, toilet, good condition, private plate



1986/7 LEYLAND OLYMPIANS

Gardner/hydracyclic, ECW semi-low height bodies, 68 seats, long tests, some single door, 72 seaters also available, from £7000



1994 L REG VOLVO

B6's, 40 high back seats, Alexander bodies, good tests.



OPEN TOP BUSES A SPECIALITY BRITAIN'S BIGGEST BUS DEALERS

Juliette Close, Purfleet Industrial Park, Purfleet, Essex, RM15 4YF



Telephone 01708 865656 Fax: 01708 864340 e-mail: sales@ensignbus.com



Visit our website for current stock at www.ensignbus.com

VEHICLE SALES

**COACH+BUS
BUYER**

VEHICLE OF THE WEEK

VAN HOOL ASTROMEGA MAN 1992



- 14/16 berth double decker, l/h drive, manual box, air conditioning also land line aircon.
- Leather horsebox lounge upstairs, 28" widescreen TV/DVD/CD systems, 2 leather Captain seats in front lounge.
- 10 Seats downstairs, 8 seats around 2 tables
- Kitchen area with full height bar and fridge. Toilet, fully carpeted throughout, drivers bunk, inverter battery chargers and leisure batteries. Webasto heater. Euroliner wheel trims.
- 12 Months MOT and tax. Very Good Condition

Tel 01787 312405
Mobile 07831 173351

£39,500 + VAT ONO

EDINBURGH COACH LINES LTD

81 Salamander Street, Leith, Edinburgh, EH6 7JZ

Telephone: 0131 554 5413/Fax: 0131 553 3721

Email: enquiries@silvercoachlines.com

1997 Setra S 250 (8 Speed Gearbox 4/4) (P) plate with 48 reclining seats, fridge, toilet, tv/video, hot water dispenser. Air con. Taxed and MOT'd. These vehicles are in immaculate condition and have been maintained to a very high standard. Choice of 3 **Price £57,500 each**

1997 Setra S 250 Auto. (R) plate. Only 1 left with the same specifications as the vehicles above. **Price £62,500 ono**

1998 Volvo B10m Cataeno Enigma (White) 51 reclining seats with air-con, radio pa system, wired for video and MOT'd till March 2007. Price reduced **£58,500 ono**

1999 Volvo B10m Mistral x 2. 51 reclining seats, air-con WC & pa system MoT'd till April & May. **Price £82,500 each ono**

All these used vehicles have removable vinyls. All prices are + VAT & sale only.

Contact: Peter on 0131 554 5413.



trent barton

Our fleet is acknowledged as one of the most modern and well-maintained in the country.

We currently have available for sale:

Optare Excels - 45 seats

'98 "S" - £22,500

'99 "V" - £41,950

'00 "V" - £44,950



**Volvo B10M Plaxtons
Expressliner coach
- 49 seats**

'99 "V" - £60,000

'00 "X" - £70,000



Prices exclusive of tyres and VAT

For further detail please contact Steve Davy:-
Telephone - 01773 536325 (24hrs)
E-mail - sdavy@trentbarton.co.uk



89 DAF/BOVA

49 seat, toilet

£13,500



88 DAF/VAN HOOL

51 seat, toilet

£5,200



52 VAUXHALL VIVARO

2900 DTI SWB 9 seater

£8,250

G Parry

29 Maes-Awel, Scleddau, Fishguard, SA65 9QZ

Tel: 07779110605

**For all your
Vehicle Sales
advertising
requirements**

**CALL Beth
or James on
01733 293249**

BEBB TRAVEL



**Optare Nouvelle 2 SR 27 seater
Mercedes 814 Vario manual**

Reg date 01/10/2002 M.O.T Feb 2007
Telma retarder, Sutrak air conditioning, Hot drink's machine, Blaupunkt radio/pa with single CD player, Courier seat with three point seat belt and pa socket, Gaudi passenger seats fitted with three point seat belts, foot rests and head rests, Full draw curtains, carpet to centre aisle, Drivers interior locker, Drivers fan, Saloon luggage racks, Large boot and side locker, Chrome wheel covers

CALL: 01443 215 110

Simonds of Botesdale

Volvo B10M 1997 Plaxton 3200. 49/53 seat. Centre demount toilet/boiler. Wired for TV/Video, fridge, Telma, Webasto, coach wash. S/S Exhaust. MOT 11/06 **£59,000 + VAT**

Leyland Tiger 1988 Plaxton 3200 TL11. 53 seat retractable belts. P/D MOT 05/07 **£6995 + VAT**

Tel: Simonds **01379 647300** or
07850 621202/3
Ask for Martyn or Adrian.

1999 T IVECO 59 12 bus 27 seats + 8 standing. Destination equipment. Power doors. MOT to August 06. Choice of two£8745 + VAT each

1995 (M) Mercedes 709 bus 25 seats + 8 standing. Destination equipment. Power doors. All white. MOT to Feb 07£4745 + VAT

1994 (M) Mercedes 709 bus with tail lift. 16 seats + 2 wheelchairs. Destination equipment. Power doors. MOT to July 06£4745 + VAT

1993 (L) Mercedes 709 bus 25 seats + 8 standing. Destination equipment. Power doors. Lap belts on all seats. All white. MOT to Oct 06£4445 + VAT

All vehicles clean, tidy and in good mechanical condition.

**Ring Clintona Minicoaches on
01277 (Brentwood) 215526**

MINSTERLEY MOTORS

We have the following vehicles available for sale due to new arrivals

2 x Jan 2003 Volvo B12D 49/53 Susundegui Sideral Executive Coaches. Air Con, Reclining Seats, 2 x monitors + video, fridge, Centre Demountable Toilet, Auto Gear-box, 3PT Seatbelts, Radio/Cass/PA System, One with Alloy wheels, Hot drinks dispenser, Reversing Camera, One owner from new, only used on tour work **£125,000 (ONO) + VAT per vehicle**

2 x 1996 (N) Plaxton Premier 350 - Volvo B10M All manual with Telma, One with Air Con, 53 Recliners, Rear Continental Door, only used on tour work **£47,000 (ONO) + VAT per vehicle**

1990 (G) Plaxton Paramount 3500 - Volvo B10M 53 Reclining seats plus courier, Seatbelts, Radio/PA, Single Glazed, Very Good Condition, MOT June 06 **£18,000 (ONO) + VAT**

All of the above are on sale due to new arrivals; any reasonable offers considered

Contact: Minsterley Motors, Stiperstones, Shrewsbury, Shropshire
Tel: 01743 791208 Mobile: 07977 222768

D&P Coaches

PLAXTON CHEETAH 814 VARIO

Nov 2001 - 29 seats - large boot - forced air - power door p/a - radio - exterior white - interior graffiti new rear calipers and disc's all round excellent condition, low mileage

Price £42,000 plus vat

TOYOTA OPTIMO (5)

March 2002 - 24 seats - radio/pa - low mileage new mot - exterior white - interior graffiti

Price £39,000 plus vat



**01252 861252 (Berkshire)
enquiries@dp-coaches.co.uk**

AUTO SERVICE (PONTYPOOL) LTD

A Family Business Established 1921



MINI BUSES & MINI COACHES

NEW

OPTARE BONITO 16 SEAT COACH, ELECTRIC PLUG DOOR, FORCED AIR, LUGGAGE BOOT.....	£45,500
OPTARE SOROCO 16 SEAT COACH, ELECTRIC PLUG DOOR, AIR CON, LUGGAGE BOOT.....	£58,500
MERCEDES SPRINTER 313Cdi 16 SEAT, BONDED TINTED WINDOWS, LUGGAGE RACKS, REAR HEATER, DECOR, CURTAINS, REAR SEATS ON TRACKING, COIF.....	£29,995
MERCEDES SPRINTER 413Cdi 16 SEAT, BONDED TINTED WINDOWS, O/S EMERGENCY DOOR, REAR LUGGAGE FACILITY, COIF.....	£34,995
FORD TRANSIT 17 SEAT 137PS WHITE UK SPEC, 3YR WARRANTY.....	NOW £20,495
FORD TRANSIT 17 SEAT 115PS WHITE UK SPEC, 3YR WARRANTY.....	£19,900

USED

03 (03) Ford Transit 300 MWB 12 seat 100ps Minibus. Electronic tachograph, Air conditioning, 66,000kms.....	£10,700
---	---------

LDV

04 (04) LDV Convey 17 seat Minibus 90ps 12,507 miles. Vinyl Floor/Omni Step. In Blue. NEW MOT.....	£10,750
04 (04) LDV Convey 17 seat Minibus 90ps, 19,105 miles. COIF/PSV.....	£10,500
04 (04) LDV Convey 17 seat Minibus 90ps 4,855mils COIF/PSV.....	£11,995
02 (02) LDV Convey 17 seat Minibus, 75ps, 30,000 miles.....	£7,995
03 (03) LDV Convey 17 seat Minibus 90ps 7,021mils COIF/PSV.....	£9,995
00 (W) LDV Convey 17 seat Minibus 3.5t New MOT.....	£4,995
99 (V) LDV Convey 17 seat Minibus COIF/PSV July 2006.....	£3,000
98 (S) LDV Convey 17 seat Minibus 3.5t New MOT.....	£5,995

WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE

NEW

Mercedes Sprinter 413Cdi 16 seats, tracking for 4 wheelchairs, underfloor lift, luggage racks, rear heater, COIF.....	£38,995
---	---------

USED

2001 VW LT46 17 seat wheelchair accessible minibus, 2.8TD Engine, 55,000miles, underfloor lift.....	£14,500
---	---------

01 (51) Renault Traffic LM35/120 13 seat accessible bus, 4 wheelchairs, inboard lift, fold out side step.....	£12,995
N (95) Ford Transit Hi Roof 13 seat Wheelchair accessible.....	£3,995

The above vehicles are subject to VAT.

Finance and extended RAC warranties are available. FSA approved

All used vehicles come with 12 months MoT/PSV. All LDV stock direct from factory.

ROCKHILL ROAD, PONTYPOOL, SOUTH WALES, NP4 8AN

10 minutes Junction 25A of M4 Motorway.

Telephone: 01495 757111 Mobile: 07850 739446 (Haydn)
or visit our website:
www.minibus-sales.co.uk to view the above stock

JOHNSONS Coach & Bus Travel



2001 (51 plate) LDV Convey 400
Diesel 16 h/b retrimmed seats, radio
cassette.....**£6,750**
plus VAT on

For more details contact Peter Johnson
on 01564 797000 or 07979245033



1998 IVECO BEULAS

49 reclining seats, air con, video +
2 monitors, PA system, coffee
machine, fridge, centre toilet. Low
mileage, MoT Oct 06.

MUST BE SEEN.

£65,000 + VAT on
Shorey's Travel
01525 860694

855/10367705H

RUTHERFORDS INTERNATIONAL

COACH HIRE - TOURS - PRIVATE HIRE

2004 October 54 plate
13.7 Euroliner, 61 seats.
Fresh water WC, DVD, Hot Drinks, Fridge.
ZF AS-Tronic gear box, MAN 410 engine
Genuine low mileage 30,500km.
All in 2 pack white.
Genuine reason for sale
£199,000

Call (01243) 543673
or (01403) 782028

PRODUCTS+ SERVICES

**CALL JAMES TO
ADVERTISE ON
THESE PAGES
ON
01733 293249**

COACH TRIMMERS

EASTGATE COACH TRIMMERS

Supplying the Bus and Coach Industry
with quality seat retrim and interior
refurbishment

Complete flooring service
Centre gangways/full floors re-laid

Collection and delivery service any-
where in the UK seven days a week

Tel: Fax:

01751 472229

email: info@eastgate-coachtrimmers.co.uk
Web: www.eastgate-coachtrimmers.co.uk

104707EM

VEHICLE SALES

BOB VALE COACH SALES

**2002 (52) MERCEDES
413CDi OPTARE SOROCO**
16 seats, 3 point belts,
power door, Aircon
£39,000

**2001 VOLVO B10M
JONCKHEERE MISTRAL**
51/53 Fainsa rec, crew seat,
Fridge, centre dem, toilet +
boiler, video/monitor, Aircon
£112,000

**1999 IVECO EURORIDER
BEULAS EL MUNDO**
51 recliners, crew seat,
centre sunken toilet, powered
continental door, Jason boiler
+ drinks rack, fridge, video/2
monitors, Air conditioning
£75,000

**1990 DAF MB2300
VAN HOOL ELIZEE**
49 recliners, centre sunken
toilet, continental door, crew
seat. Double Glazing, Auto
Gear box
£26,000

Bob Vale Coach Sales Ltd

Tel: 01494 716996

Fax: 01494 716331

www.bobvalecoachsales.com

BUILDINGS

HEAVY DUTY STEEL BUILDINGS



- ◆ Bus Workshops ◆ Secure Storage
- ◆ Supplied any width, any length
- ◆ Building to BS5590 ◆ Doors high enough for Double Deckers
- ◆ Finance available

For further information phone

BLUELINE BUILDINGS
01709 578333 anytime

FOR SALE

JOHNSONS Coach & Bus Travel

We are offering for sale 20 Wayfarer Saver
ticket machines with base plates, keys, etc
And

Meggitt Fuel Monitoring System complete
with driver/vehicle keys, software, etc.

**Both in good working order now
surplus as new kit is fitted.
OFFERS FOR BOTH REQUIRED –
MUST BE SOLD**

For more details contact Peter Johnson
on 01564 797000 or 07979245033

On Behalf of a Major UK Finance Company

FOR SALE BY PRIVATE TREATY



IVECO CC80E18MP Indcar Mago 2 29-Seater Coach

Registration No: FN02 VCC

VIN No: SBCA80D0002352507

Date of Registration: 21/03/02

Odometer Reading: 149,118Kms approx

Specifications/Additional Information:

Engine Type: 8460 41 S

Engine Power: 130KW

6 Speed Gearbox

This coach is fitted with: 'Fainsa' Reclining Seats complete with
Retractable Seat Belts, Overhead Storage, Courier Seat, Courier &
Driver PA System, ThermoKing 'ClimAIRE' Air Conditioning Unit,
Electric Front Blind, 29 Seats Plus Courier Plus Driver.
Tested until 21st March 2007.

**VIEWING BY APPOINTMENT ONLY FROM 10.00AM TO 4.00PM
– MONDAY TO FRIDAY AT OUR BOVINGDON PREMISES.**

**FOR FURTHER DETAILS VISIT OUR WEBSITE OR CONTACT
SIMON WITHALL OR TERRY MADDEN.**

WYLES HARDY & CO Ley Hill Road, Bovington, Hemel Hempstead,
Herts HP3 ONW UK. T: +44 (0)1442 832234 www.wyleshardy.com

WYLES HARDY & CO

GARAGE EQUIPMENT

Finkbeiner
Lifting Systems



MAYWOOD
EQUIPMENT GROUP LTD

Tel: 01622 718044
www.maywoodgroup.co.uk

MOBILE COLUMN LIFTS

Brand new
mobile lifts for sale,
8 tonne per column

BEST PRICE IN UK
0845 644 9303

Commercial Vehicle Lift & Commercial Brake Testers FOR SALE

Contact **Roger on**
01384 410008
07932 069627

10650/GE

**CBW PAID
FOR...
WORTH MORE**

INSURANCE



**EXCLUSIVE
MINIBUS &
SMALL FLEET
SCHEME**

Tel: 0113 244 8686

Gauntlet Risk Management Ltd
Crown House, Armley Road, Leeds LS12 2EJ
F: 0113 243 8668 W: gauntletgroup.com
Authorised & Regulated by the Financial Services Authority

INSURANCE

S U M M I T

AT LLOYD'S

Quote for a single vehicle to large fleets
Cover for foreign travel available
Cover for windscreens and glass available
Pay by instalments

Please contact your broker for further details

Amlin House, Parkway, Chelmsford, Essex CM2 0UR

Part of Amlin Insurance Services, an Appointed Representative of Amlin Underwriting Limited
which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority.

Coach Insurance

REGISTRATIONS



• SPEEDY REGISTRATIONS CO LTD •

'Buy with confidence - CNDA Member'
'ALL AT £89, discount on two or more'



BIG 8742	BIG 8756	DIG 3876	INZ 4303	OUI 8921	RLZ 7276
BIG 8743	BIG 8757	DIG 3877	KJZ 4281	OUI 8922	RLZ 7277
BIG 8744	BIG 8759	DIG 3878	KJZ 4282	OUI 8923	RLZ 7278
BIG 8750	BIG 8791	DIG 3879	KJZ 4283	OUI 8924	RLZ 7279
BIG 8751	BIG 8792	DIG 3744	KJZ 4284	PKZ 9065	PUI 2306
BIG 8752	BIG 8793	DIG 3745	NUI 7668	PKZ 9066	PUI 2305
BIG 8753	BIG 8794	DIG 3746	NUI 7669	PLZ 8713	RLZ 1176
BIG 8754	BIG 8795	INZ 4301	NUI 7690	PLZ 9963	RLZ 1189
BIG 8755	BIG 8796	INZ 4302	OUI 8920	PKZ 2152	RLZ 1175

We Buy for Cash, also Part Exchange
Tel: (028) 6638 7124 Fax (028) 6638 7771
Millwood, Lisbellaw, Co. Fermanagh, N. Ireland BT94 5HQ

REPAIRS AND RECOVERY

24 HR COACH RESCUE SERVICE

Folkestone
01303 261870

Mobile 07767 475625

Personal Service - Professional Pride

buzzlines
coach operators

5
MINUTES
FROM
CHANNEL
TUNNEL

15
MINUTES
FROM
DOVER

- 24hr roadside assistance with engineers "on call"
- Priority access to Channel Tunnel & Dover Docks
- U.K. continental breakdown assistance & recovery
- Replacement vehicles & drivers for onward transportation of passengers
- Modern fully equipped workshops and stores
- Vehicle inspections, servicing & repairs undertaken
- Fleet of 36 modern air conditioned vehicles



AS A
LEADING
ESTABLISHED
COACH OPERATOR
WE CAN PROVIDE
THE HELP YOU
NEED - WHEN YOU
NEED IT
MOST

Unit G1, Lympne Industrial Park, Nr. Hythe, Kent CT21 4LR
sales@buzzlines.co.uk | www.buzzlines.co.uk | Fax 01303 230093



Sovereign Auto Services Ltd

Professional PCV Engineering & Recovery Services

- ♦ Engine rebuilding
- ♦ Time served PCV engineers
- ♦ Mobile repairs, we will come to your depot or roadside
- ♦ Engine and gearbox changing
- ♦ O Licence inspections undertaken
- ♦ Major work undertaken
- ♦ Long term or short term contracts

*Professionalism, flexibility and reliability are key to
Sovereign reigning supreme*

Call us now for more information:

Office: 01282 869328

07908 322 599

Mobile: 07940 116427 (Anytime)

admin@sovereignautoservices.com

Unit 11, Colne Commercial Centre, Exchange Street,
Colne, Lancs, BB8 0SQ

SEATING



PHOENIX
SEATING LIMITED
for Strength, Safety, Comfort & Style

Phoenix Seating Limited manufactures the highest quality seating for the commercial and passenger markets. The whole manufacturing process from concept through design to engineering is carried out in-house. All seats are tested to M1 M2 M3 standard directive 761115 and ECE R14.05 using accredited test centres throughout the U.K. Phoenix offers a comprehensive consulting and design package ensuring customers specific requirements are precisely met.

SPARES

**We Repair or Replace
VISCOFANS**



FOR TRUCKS
AND BUSES
Nationwide
Delivery/Collection
Most credit cards accepted

Technical Services (UK) Ltd
Tel: 01274 637851 Fax: 01274 637852
www.technical-services.co.uk
www.viscofans.com

TICKET EQUIPMENT

**Wayfarer Saver and Wayfarer 3
Ticket Machines**



Anything from a simple 'stand alone' ticket machine to a complete 'stored fares' ticket system, configured and installed with full after sales back-up and help line support

**CAMBIST AND PENDAMATIC CHANGE
DISPENSERS AND COIN TENDER TABLES**

**John Groves
TICKET SYSTEMS**

Contact us
now for
further
details



Tel 0208 9089 088
Fax 0208 9089 099
e-mail sales@jgts.com

Your one stop shop for fare collection



WAYFARER

Pay Cell



PENDAMATIC

www.cambist.se

SEATBELTS

**BARRY HALL
INSTALLATIONS**

// securon //



URBAN



SERVICE



COACH



SERVICE



HAND RAIL PADDING



ACCESSORIES

- **Seat Belt Supplies**
- **Hand Rail Padding**
- **Next Day Delivery**
- **Seat Belt Installations**
- **Double Deckers Seat Belted**



The UK's no1 Seatbelt Installers
Call the Experts: 01522 689911

Email: info@bhiuk.com
www.bhiuk.com

Fax: 01522 689922



10567/SBE

Your Seat Belt Installation is our Reputation

TICKET EQUIPMENT



**WAYFARER 'SAVER' TICKET
MACHINES**



**WAYFARER '2' MACHINES, DEPOT READERS,
BASEPLATES, MODULES, FULL SYSTEMS OR ADD
ONS AVAILABLE.**



**ALMEX 'A90' TICKET MACHINES,
DEPOT READERS, BASEPLATES & 256k ACES
AVAILABLE.**

WAYFARER MCV Card Readers

**WAYFARER '2' Machines, Depot readers, baseplates and modules
FULL SYSTEMS OR ADD ONS AVAILABLE.**

Full repair service for Wayfarer and mechanical machinery.
SETRIGHT AND ALMEX 'A' MECHANICAL MACHINES AVAILABLE.
Driver Cash Boxes, Change Dispensers, Cash Bags on Bus Cash Vaults.

Ticket Rolls - Plain or Printed + Thermal

PART EXCHANGE AND/OR OLD & REDUNDANT EQUIPMENT PURCHASED

MARK TERRILL - TICKET MACHINERY

5 De Grey Close, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 2JR
Tel/Fax: 01273-474816. Mobile: 07770-666159
Email: mark.terrill@ukonline.co.uk

10421/TTC

TRAINING

NOVADATA LTD

01376 552999

www.novadata.co.uk



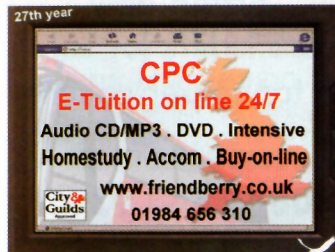
PCV CPC courses
National, 20-26 May '06

International, 15-17 May
Braintree, Exam 9th June

Digital Tachograph

Training for drivers,

managers & trainers



TYRES

TD TYRES

205/75R 17.5	Uniroyal	£71.00
215/75R 17.5	Budget	£61.00
245/70R 19.5	Continental	£129.00
275/70R 22.5	Dunlop Remould	£99.00
275/70R 22.5	Matador City	£129.00
275/80R 22.5	Premium Make	£165.00
295/80R 22.5	New	From £116.00
295/80R 22.5	Regal	£162.00
295/80R 22.5	Continental	£175.00
295/80R 22.5	Michelin XZE2+	£209.00
305/75R 24.5	Goodyear	£275.00
315/80R 22.5	Goodyear	£189.00
315/80R 22.5	Regal	£173.00
315/80R 22.5	New	From £135.00

www.tdtyres.com

More Stock Available

All prices are subject to VAT and availability

Tel: 0800 298 4755

**CALL JAMES TO ADVERTISE
ON 01733 293249**

TO ADVERTISE ON THESE PAGES CALL 01733 293249

Seen something funny? Send it to mark.williams@rouncymedia.co.uk, fax 0845 2802927 or write to: Last Stop, CBW, 3 The Office Village, Cygnet Park, Hampton, Peterborough PE7 8FD

Bright ideas

We couldn't resist spreading this story, dredged up from the American press by a *Private Eye* reader:

"This is what can happen when people don't think things through," Lt James McDonagh of the Calhoun County Sheriff's Department told a press conference in Michigan.

"The driver got lost this morning in the Leroy Township area and when he backed into a field to turn around, near J Drive South, his Mercury sedan became stuck in the mud. After several futile attempts to free his car, with his rear wheels just spinning around, he suddenly thought of a way to get the vehicle out of the mud. But in retrospect, he can see now that it wasn't a very bright idea.

"He placed his toolbox on the accelerator to rev the engine, then got behind the car and tried to push it free. He was successful in freeing the vehicle, but hadn't thought about how he would regain

control of it.

"Once it was out of the mud, the Mercury sedan accelerated across a cut soybean field, killing a cow in the process, while the man ran helplessly behind it. It travelled half a mile, reaching an estimated speed of 100mph and sometimes becoming airborne,

before crashing into a tree. The impact crushed the car back to the windshield, which is how we can estimate the speed.

"No tickets were issued, and we won't be releasing the driver's name. He's suffered enough already. - *Battle Creek Enquirer*



Love bus? Among London General's new Scottish-registered environment-friendly buses (see news story on page 5) is the Peckham service bearing a licence plate reading 'SN06 BNK'. Late-light revellers returning home along its South London route with alcohol-blurred eyesight could no doubt be forgiven for misreading the characters as an encouragement to progressive sexual activity.

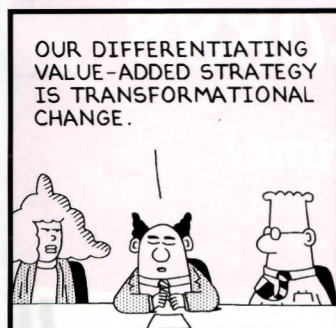
Googled...

www.alsa.es

Curious about the latest acquisition by National Express Group? The ALSA website is ample demonstration of the impressive Spanish operator's breadth of express and hire services. It has 1,300 vehicles, all Euro III. It's a real eye-opener. For a start, the fleet's to die for, comprising a high number of top-drawer German vehicles. Dip into the timetable and you quickly realise just how huge the network is. If anything it's a clone of something called National Express...



Dilbert



Two minute interview



Full Name: John Horn
Age: 52 (I had a tough paper round)
Occupation: Sales director – East Lancs

Will there be more passengers on coaches and buses? Yes, increased congestion, town centre pedestrianisation and rises in fuel prices will dictate the growth of park and rides.

If Yes, who will they be? More commuters and shoppers will turn to buses. They will be increasingly priced off the roads.

Which recent legislation has been the most irritating or useless? I'm more concerned about the effects of future legislation like the European Bus & Coach Directive which will have a profound effect on traditional British designs – such as the need for two staircases on double deckers with over 50 seats and the need for larger seat pitches. We've already done more than enough by implementing and working to DDA requirements.

Give the industry's business managers 20 words of advice: Carry on with the progress that has been made over the past five years.

When you got your first job in the industry was it love at first sight? Yes it was. Apprentice coachbuilder – I was born to it (I've often been termed an 'anorak'). It's nice to earn your living from something you care passionately about.

Which vehicle do you love the most, and why? My 1964 MCW-bodied ex-Portsmouth Atlantean. It has a lot of associations with my youth and is one of the first batch they bought. It was the first time I'd seen a rear-engined bus – so it holds special memories.



**COACH &
COMMERCIAL
LTD.**

*Specialists
in Coach Repairs*



***FREE Estimates
at your premises***
Between Your Demanding Work Schedules

-  **SPECIALISE IN INSURANCE WORK**
-  Replacement Stretch Panels
-  Re-Sprays
-  Refurbish vehicles with updated front and backs
-  All accident repairs big or small on all makes of vehicles
-  Manufacture Body Panels
-  Mobile Body Repairs
-  Emergency repair service to get vehicle back on the road
(European Cover)
-  NO JOB TOO BIG OR TOO SMALL
-  Fleet Maintenance

***Tel: David Baker 01279 730888
Mob: 07956 429239 (anytime)
Based near Stansted Airport***